

**St. Andrews Lutheran Church**  
4910 Claremont Ave.  
Stockton, CA 95207

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# The FishHook

September 2016



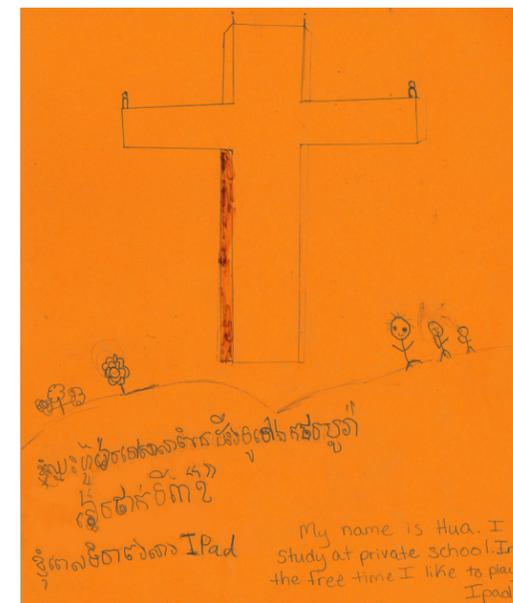
**St. Andrews Lutheran Church**

*Inspiring Our Community to Live Out the Hope Found in Christ*

## Crossing Cambodia

### Our Sponsorship of Hua

Over the past three years our Sunday school students have been helping to raise funds for Crossing Cambodia. We are sponsoring a child named Nay Kimhua, Hua for short. Hua is in third grade now and loves riding bike, playing games, and watching/playing soccer. He also is enjoying going to school and learning to read and write. Through our support of Crossing Cambodia, Hua is given food, loving care, medical attention, and a chance to go to school. He has learned a ton in the three years we have been supporting him. Thank you for all your donations and keep up the good work. We hope to raise another \$1200 this year to continue our support of Hua and Crossing Cambodia.



*More information continued inside...*

#### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Welcome  
**SEPTEMBER**

**September 4th** - Cross+Gen  
@ 9:45am

**September 5th** - Labor Day  
- Office Closed

**September 6th** - LWML @ 1:00pm

**September 7th** - Prayers & Squares  
@ 9:00am  
- Prayer Group @ 4:30pm  
- Mentor Huddle @ 5:00pm  
- Stone 4: My Bible @ 6:30pm  
- H2H & Youth @ 6:30pm

**September 8th** - Caring Partners  
@ 12:00pm  
- Plymouth Square @ 1:30pm  
- Choir @ 6:30pm

**September 10th** - Courage House  
Quilts @ 9:00am

**September 12th** - Exodus Bible  
Study @ 9:00am  
- Worship @ Rio Las Palmas  
@ 1:30pm

**September 13th** - MOPS @ 9:00am  
- MOPPETS Luncheon  
@ 11:30am  
- New Life @ 5:30pm

**September 14th** - FishHook Due  
- Stone 4: My Bible @ 6:30pm  
- H2H & Youth @ 6:30pm

**September 15th** - Commodities  
@ 6:30am  
- Bruce's Bible Study  
@ 10:00am  
- Choir @ 6:30pm  
- Women's Chorale @ 7:30pm

**September 16th** - Taize @ 7:00pm

**September 17th** - Good Shepherd  
@ 12:00pm

**September 21st** - Stone 4: My Bible  
@ 6:30pm  
- H2H & Youth @ 6:30pm

**September 22nd** - Caring Partners  
@ 12:00pm  
- Choir @ 6:30pm

**September 24th** - Good Shepherd  
@ 12:00pm

**September 27th** - MOPS @ 9:00am  
- St. Mary's Dining Hall  
@ 9:30am  
- New Life @ 5:30pm

**September 28th** - Stone 4: My Bible  
@ 6:30pm  
- H2H & Youth @ 6:30pm

**September 28th - October 6th**  
- Admin Out of Office

**September 29th** - Choir @ 6:30pm

If you have a question about an upcoming event please contact the church office: 957.8750 or Admin@standrewsstockton.org.

## FAITH STEPPING STONES



Faith Stepping Stones is a faith based parenting education from cradle to graduation through eight short-courses, which pull parents into the role of primary faith mentors for their own children every night through blessing, prayer, scripture, Highs & Lows, and faith dialogue. All classes are held on Wednesday evenings throughout the year.

### Stone: My Bible

(Sept. 7, 14, 21, 28; Oct. 5, 12, 19, 26) This class is for children going into 2nd and 3rd grade along with their parents. This class will run for eight weeks and be taught on Wednesday evenings at 6:30PM starting on Wednesday, September 7th. At the end of this class children will receive a Bible from the church. Children and parents commit to read a Bible verse nightly, and continue with Highs & Lows, prayer and blessing nightly. Older children and their parents who have yet to receive a Bible from the church are also welcome to join us for this class. Please RSVP to the church office by September 1st.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL

This should be another great year of fun and learning for your children. There are just a few things you should know to help your child get the most out of this year.



- If you have not done so already, please make sure to fill out a registration form for your child(ren).
- Please do not send gum or toys with your child to Sunday school. Thank you!
- Please encourage your children to bring their Bible to class each week.
- We collect an offering each week at Sunday school. This year we will again be raising money for "Crossing Cambodia." We will be sponsoring a child, named Hua, in Cambodia to help provide him meals and a chance to go to school. It costs about \$100 a month to help a child through Crossing Cambodia ministry. We hope to raise \$1200 throughout this Sunday school year!
- Please continue the faith conversation at home! One great way is by going through the FAITH 5 every night in your home. Check out the bulletin each week for suggested readings and blessings to use with your family each night.

- 1) Share highs / lows of the day/week
- 2) Read a verse of Scripture together
- 3) Talk about how their highs / lows relate to the verse
- 4) Pray for one another's highs / lows
- 5) Bless one another

- If you have any questions please feel free to contact the Director of Family Ministry Tracy Krueger at 209-957-8750 or tracy@standrewsstockton.org.



Get Ready ~ Get Set ~ Let's Go!

Our Women in Mission (LWML) is ready to start-up again. The first meeting will be Tuesday, September 6th, at 1:00pm in the Church Social Hall.

Be ready to find out how we can reach out to others, so we can make a difference in their life.

Remember to invite someone new, so they can enjoy being part of this group.

Any questions, please contact Sheryl Bettencourt at 368.8991.

## H2H



### Head to the Heart

St Andrews three year faith forming ministry for youth in grades 6-8 who wish to grow in the faith into which they were baptized.

H2H 2016-17 begins Wednesday, September 7 at 6:30pm in the sanctuary. If you did not attend the registration night, please be prepared to pay the fee of \$40 per child for this year's materials. We will have registration forms and the program schedule for this year for you as well.

Our Theme this year is Living Faith. So What is a Christian? How does my faith affect my everyday decisions? Why should I care? We will study the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer and some Hot Topics seeing how our story connects with God's story and how we can live out our faith every day.

Remember that we meet **Wednesday evenings from 6:30-8:15pm.** Fall semester is 11 weeks from September 7 – November 16, 2016. Winter semester is 8 weeks, January 4- February 22, 2017. Spring semester is 6 weeks from April 19 – May 24, 2017. Along with our Wednesday meetings there will be service and fellowship events throughout the year.

If you have any questions call Deaconess Ann Marie Rehbein in the church office.

**H2H Mentor Meeting** – H2H mentors will meet **Wednesday, September 7 at 5pm** to go over our September lessons and continue mentor training. Dinner will be provided.

## HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH

We will be meeting Wednesdays from 6:30-8:15pm in the youth room starting Wednesday, September 7th. Hope to see you there!



Contact Tracy if you have questions: tracy@standrewsstockton.org.

## BRIANNA KLEINERT'S TESTIMONY

As many of you may have heard by now, I went to Ecuador on a mission trip. In preparation for these trips, everyone is asked to prepare a personal testimony that can be shared overseas. Often people tell of their life's journey that has brought them into God's family. People speak about God's faithfulness and love; some speak about a time when they weren't following God and so can testify to his forgiveness and grace. Preparing a personal testimony gives you the opportunity to truly reflect on your spiritual walk with God and where it has brought you today. Initially the testimony I had written was about growing up in the faith and how that affected me as I got older and entered the real world. I wouldn't say it was a bad testimony, because all of our stories no matter what they are, are beautiful and a reflection of God's work in our lives. However, as I was writing it I began to ask myself, is this really my testimony? Is this the thing in my life, today, that is a reflection of my relationship with God? If I'm being honest with myself, the answer to that question would be no. What has become a reflection of my relationship with God is the fact that I don't have any relationship besides the one I have with God. My true testimony is my singleness. This struggle in today's world is a bit of what I've written for all of you today. I'm going to share some of my story in hopes that it helps you, whether you're a teenager, a young adult like myself, a parent, guardian, grandparent, etc.

Now, I'm not necessarily saying that I'm planning on being single forever although that possibility has crossed my mind. What I am saying is that I've come to a place in my spiritual journey where God has been put first above everyone else. Our culture today is saturated with sexuality and the permissiveness of promiscuity. I do hope that that, in itself, is not news to any of you. Sexuality and the idea of sex before marriage has become so common that it's an everyday occurrence in our culture today, it is the rule not the exception. I've heard stories that truly break my heart because this next generation of adults simply don't know any different. Being a single woman in her late twenties has exposed me more to this issue than I have cared for it to. I, myself, have been

hurt, healed, and grown more in my spiritual faith due to this issue than any other. It has taken me years to understand and discern the yearnings in my own heart of those given to me by God from those given to me by the world around me. Everyone wants to be loved and accepted in some shape or form, God has created us this way. However, this can be manipulated and distorted to become some of our greatest sorrows. So without further ado, here's a portion of my testimony that I pray could be used to help maybe just one of you reading this:

*The Bible tells us that God is love. We are to love God with all our whole mind, body, and soul. We do this because God did it first and showed us how. While we were still sinners, Jesus died for us. This is love. This love is our purpose in life. This relationship with God is what our hearts truly desire. Earlier I said that "everything we want and desire, all this can be found in love, in our perfect person." This is what I believed when I was younger and it was a lie because we are only fulfilled, content, and complete in Jesus. He is the perfect person we all need. All the pain and brokenness that comes from love and relationships today is because we try to put a person above God. We look toward an imperfect and sinful person to bring us joy, happiness, and purpose. This may be a boyfriend, girlfriend, spouse, child. For me, it was a boyfriend once. I had my person, this relationship, and yet had never been more lonely, because I did not have a relationship with God. What I found is that only God can provide the joy and peace that I desired. God has loved me, will love me, forever no matter what I do. God's love is a fact. People are imperfect but God will never fail us. Sometimes I still struggle because my life does not include a family and children and that this is not my purpose in life like it is for others. Instead I trust in God and ask for him to give me his purpose. relationship with God is more important than any relationship with a guy. I trust in God's timing. In the meantime, I tell God my struggles, I tell him my desires, and ultimately I look to him to provide for me and I trust in that. I will not compromise my relationship with God for a relationship with someone who does not respect me and, more importantly, does not respect God. He is my one true love and, with him, I know I will live happily ever after into eternity.*

# Crossing Cambodia

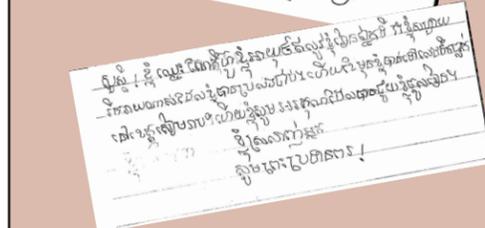
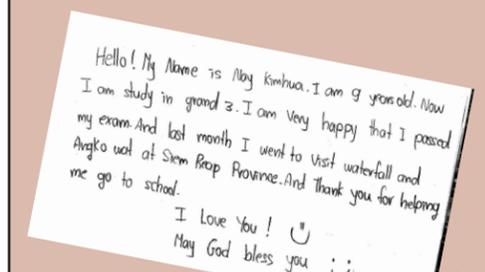
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Crossing Cambodia was founded in 2013 by Greg Holz and Chea Sokly. They worked together previously with street children at TransformAsia Church in Battambang, Cambodia. But as they worked with these children, God said to go deeper.

So Crossing Cambodia was created as a way to meet the children's deeper needs. To be cared for and loved as children of God. To make sure they were not only fed physically, but also mentally and spiritually. In this way, they can have strong roots in Christ and will grow up knowing God's love and plan for their lives.

At present, Crossing Cambodia sponsors 25 children. 15 attend regular school and 10 more in our on-site preschool. Each day they are picked up at 6am, fed, bathed, given clean clothes, and cared for as if they were our own family. Each evening after 4pm, they are then taken back to stay with their families as Cambodian Law now emphasizes that families be kept together at every opportunity.

It is through the daily interaction and strong relationships that are built that there is opportunity to make God's love known to these children and their families.



### Thrivent Choice

Benefit Thrivent Financial members can recommend where Thrivent distributes a portion of its charitable outreach funds using a vehicle called Choice Dollars®. Since 2010, members have used this program to direct \$300 million to churches and nonprofits nationwide.

#### 2015 Year in Review:

- More than 313,700 eligible members directed Choice Dollars.
- More than \$54.2 million in charitable grant funds was distributed.
- More than 32,200 churches and nonprofit organizations are enrolled in the program.
- Of those, more than 29,200 churches and nonprofit organizations received grant funding through Thrivent Choice.

Thanks to Thrivent and its members, St. Andrews and Newday Preschool have both received funding through Choice Dollars.

You can make a difference by designating your Choice Dollars today! Learn more by visiting [Thrivent.com/thriventchoice](http://Thrivent.com/thriventchoice) or calling 1-800-847-4836.

### Thrivent Action Teams

It starts with an idea powered by your passion. Bring a team together to make an immediate impact on a cause you care about. Think about an unmet need in your community and how you could help. Apply to lead your volunteer team in a one-time fundraiser, service activity, or educational event that can be completed within 90 days. Once your project is approved, you'll receive a Thrivent Action Kit, including:

- Promotional banner
- Invitations and thank-you cards
- Thrivent action team T-shirts
- A \$250 Community Impact Card you can use as seed money to purchase project supplies and create promotional materials.

All benefit Thrivent members are eligible to lead two Thrivent Action Teams per calendar year. Apply now to get started with your community impact project! Go to [Thrivent.com](http://Thrivent.com) and search Thrivent Action Teams or call 1-800-847-4836 and say, "Thrivent Action Teams."

## BEAR CREEK WATER

*"For I was hungry and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink."*

- Matthew 25:35

One child dies every 15 seconds from preventable, water-related diseases. Bear Creek Water exists to save the lives of children like this, we raise money by collecting and recycling plastic bottles and aluminum cans to cover the cost of digging wells in third world countries. Because of partners like St. Andrews, we are now raising funds for well 83. 83 wells in 7 years--that's what happens when the Holy Spirit sends a simple yet amazing idea and the Church and community get behind it.

YOU can be a part of Bear Creek Water by:

- Bringing in plastic bottles and aluminum cans on Sundays
- Asking friends, neighbors, relatives, employers, social organizations, sports teams, and event coordinators to save their recyclables and give to you to bring to church
- Volunteering on one of our teams, one Sunday Service per month; we need you
- Supporting this mission project with prayer and any means you can
- ... make a difference! RECYCLE or contact us for questions on how to support this project!

All of us can do something to save the children.

You can find the recycling bin to donate plastic bottles and aluminum cans in the lobby of the main building near the church offices.

## NOTE from CHOIR DIRECTOR

Mixed Choir rehearsals will resume **September 8th, 6:30-7:30pm** in the Sanctuary (continuing weekly).

Women's Chorale rehearsals resume **September 15th, 7:30-8:30pm** in the Sanctuary (continuing on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month).

See inside and take a quiz to see where you could join your St. Andrews Family in Music!



2015-2016 Theme:

**We Are The Starry Eyed**

Moms of children 6 and under are invited to join us at MOPS. Get ready! The sky's your limit! This year we will run wildly toward wonder, hope and kindness because we see the light in the darkness and choose to live courageously. We open our eyes to wonder and choose hope over fear.

Please invite any moms of children 6 and under to join us at our first meeting, Tuesday September 13 from 9-11am in the Parish Hall. Our loving moppets workers take care of the children while the moms meet for encouragement, fun and learning how we can explore wonder, hope and kindness as we draw closer to Jesus in this season of mothering. If you have any questions call Deaconess Ann Marie Rehbein in the church office.

The MOPS steering team will meet Tuesday, September 20th at 8:45am at Liz Cliburn's home to finalize plans for our first meetings of the year.

## OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Pick up your box in the narthex today, along with a pamphlet that gives suggestions on what to pack, and items not to include. The pamphlet also gives options for contributing the \$7.00 for the cost of shipping. If you have the capabilities, the best way to contribute is on line.

By doing this you will be given the info for your box, and you will receive an Email telling you where your box was shipped. You can also write a check, but be aware that this will not be cashed until November by Operation Christmas Child. You may also include \$7.00 cash. Your boxes can be turned in any Sunday until Oct 16. For those who do not want to pack a box, we will have a large box in the narthex for you to drop your contributions in. If you just want to help with shipping, please put your money, label from contribution on line, or a check made out to "Operation Christmas Child" and put it in an envelope marked "Operation Christmas Child" in the Sunday Offering.

Contact: Joanne Fisher (474-3704) or Terry Clark (477-8935) for more info.



## SMALL GRPS / BIBLE STUDIES

Fall Small Groups, Bible Studies and Prayer Group

### A Disciple Grows

In addition to our Sunday morning discipleship opportunities at 9:45am many members of our congregation gather together around God's Word and in relationship to help one another grow in faith through Small Groups, Bible Studies, and Prayer Group throughout the week.

The Prayer Group meets the 1st & 3rd Wednesdays at 4:30pm. All are welcome to come and pray. Contact Sheryl Bettencourt with questions at 368.8991.

If you have questions about Small Groups and what they are about contact the church office: 209.957.8750, Admin@standrewsstockton.org,

Some of our Current and Past Leaders include:

#### Small Group Leaders:

Ann Marie & Michael Rehbein  
Ron & Bonnie Centers,  
Steve & Karen Kelly  
Bob & Jaime Marlowe,  
Dan & Tunde Baker  
Pat & Harriet Doyle  
Dan Deuel  
Diane Robertson  
Marian Schwartz

#### Bible Study Leaders:

Sheryl Bettencourt  
Bruce Kleinert  
Dax Martin  
Laura Moore  
Linda Kaufman

#### Prayer Group Leader:

Sheryl Bettencourt

## LIFELIGHT BIBLE STUDY

Men and Women alike are welcome! Summer is over and it's that time to start-up again. Are you looking for an opportunity to draw closer to your Lord? Are you new in our congregation and want to make new friends?

Come and join us as we study the book of Exodus. We gather together in the Church Social Hall **Monday mornings at 9:00am starting Monday, September 12th.**

Be sure and invite a neighbor or a friend who may not go to our church.

For more information, please contact Sheryl Bettencourt at 368.8991.

## SUNDAY AM DISCIPLESHIP

9:45am Discipleship



### 1st Sundays –

Cross+Gen (all generations) Faith Formation (see Cross+Gen Column)

### 2nd, 3rd, 4th (and 5th) Sundays –

Childcare (under age 3)

- Preschool Hall Way, F

Preschool - Kindergarten

- Preschool Hall Way, E

1st - 3rd Grade - Preschool Hall Way, K

4th - 5th Grade - Preschool Hall Way, J

6th - 8th Grade - Youth Room

Adults (high school and up)

- Fellowship Hall, A

Each age group will use the Sunday Worship Scripture text as the basis for their lessons in order to solidify and better understand the weekly text as it relates to our lives as followers of Christ. Adult discipleship will meet in the Fellowship hall and include a mixture of large group and small group discussion lead by different facilitators from the congregation.

This will be our set-up through the end of 2016. When Pastor Dan returns mid-October, we'll work on getting feedback from the congregation to see how this set-up works as we prepare for the start of 2017. Looking forward to growing in faith with you!

The Prayer Group resumes on **Sunday, September 11th.** This group is open to anyone who would like to join or pop in when available. For more information, contact Sheryl Bettencourt at 209.368.8991.



The Ecclesiastes' Bible Study will not meet September 4th. For more information on how many weeks remain, please contact Charlie Johnson at 209.951.8655.

## CROSS + GEN

What is Cross+Gen?

Cross+Gen Faith Formation brings all ages together to learn and grow in faith together through prayer, praise, the reading of scripture, movement and discussion. The aim is to build lasting relationships across generations where the gifts of the younger meet the needs of the older and vice versa. Check out this exciting opportunity to make an impact in the lives of those in this congregation. Contact Holly or Tracy with questions ([holly@standrewsstockton.org](mailto:holly@standrewsstockton.org), [Tracy@standrewsstockton.org](mailto:Tracy@standrewsstockton.org), 957.8750).



## CONNECTION & CELEBRATION

The following is a list of events that are being planned by the committee, or other organizations within the church to give you a chance for CONNECTION & CELEBRATION:

- **September:** a) Operation Christmas Child is still available in the Narthex. Last day for collection will be October 16th.
- b) Sept 11: Bowling event 
- **October 22:** Good Shepherd Oketoberfest 
- **November:** a) Thanksgiving Baskets
- b) Nov 23: Pie Sharing 
- **December:**
  - a) Dec 10: Good Shepherd Christmas Program
  - b) Dec 11: Christmas Concert
- **January 28:** Trivia Night
- **February:** Family Night
- **March:** Lent Services
- **April 13:** Seder Meal
- **May:** Wine Tasting

More information will be available as we get closer to the individual events. As always, we are open to any ideas.

Contact Joanne Fisher (474.3704) or Terry Clark (477.8935) for more information.



# Have You Heard of the Faith 5?

We introduce the FAITH 5 (Share, Read, Talk, Pray, Bless) to our families through our *Faith Stepping Stone* classes:

- **Stone 1: Raising a Healthy Baby** introduces what a blessing is and the benefits of being blessed each and every night before you head off to bed.
- **Stone 2: Raising a Healthy Preschooler** adds prayer and talk about the importance of connecting with God each and every day of our lives.
- **Stone 3: Entry into School** adds “share”, teaching our families to keep communication open by sharing their highs and lows each day.
- **Stone 4: My Bible** talks about the importance of reading God’s Word, the Bible, everyday.
- **Stone 5: Livin’ Forgiveness** our first communion class, talks about the importance of forgiveness during the “talk” part of the FAITH 5 to say, “I’m sorry” and “I forgive you” each night as we all make mistakes and need forgiveness from one another and the forgiveness that comes through Jesus.
- **Stone 6: Surviving Adolescence** adds to the “talk” time by asking, “What is God teaching us through the Bible reading today?” and “How have we seen God at work in our lives today?”

Doing each of these five simple steps each and every day will help you grow closer with the ones you share with as well as help you grow stronger in your relationship with God.

## Where else can you find the Faith 5 at St. Andrews?

At *H2H* each week we use the Faith 5 as we meet both in the large group as well as in our small group meeting time.

The small group is the place where highs and lows are shared, scripture that we have already spoken of in the large group can be discussed further, and talking about how the Bible and our faith relates to everyday life is the focus of small group time. They may also pray in the small group, but we end the evening back in the large group for prayer around the altar and blessing one another.

Then we send it home to the family to continue the discussion during the rest of the week. In their faith journals for each lesson there are Faith 5 home huddle pages with scripture verses for each day and a place to journal their thoughts and prayers.

The Faith 5 provides the outline for our monthly 1st Sunday *Cross+Gen* faith formation time at 9:45am. We introduce the theme/scripture for the day through an activity that allows all ages to share with one another, read and talk about the Bible passage for the day, pray for and bless one another.

At *Sunday school* the children get a chance to go through the FAITH 5 each week in their small groups. New this year the lessons for the 1st-5th graders are outlined using the share, read, talk, pray, bless format.

Our *high school youth* also incorporate the FAITH 5 by starting each meeting with sharing their highs and lows, then reading and talking about scripture as they go through the lesson for the evening and closing the night off by praying with and for one another and blessing each other before heading home for the night.

My *small group* meeting each week tries to incorporate the FAITH 5 as well. It is great to get to know one another in a deeper way as we hold one another’s lives up in prayer. We have grown in our prayer lives through this. When we started meeting some years ago praying out loud seemed like a scary thing and so one person just said a quick thank you for this group and we were all glad when it was some else’s turn to pray. Now everyone gets a chance to add to the prayers and we find it is easier as we already know what to pray for because of the earlier sharing.

For more information check out [faith5.org](http://faith5.org) or read *Holding Your Family Together* by Rich Melheim.

“My first experience with the Faith5 happened at a Cross+Gen conference last October with Tracy. I was familiar with the practice because of working at St. Andrews but had only ever shared highs and lows. I appreciated thinking about how a passage of scripture related to what had been going on during our days at the conference and being able to give a few words of blessing was quite cool. Having no family at home, sometimes it has felt that this isn’t something I can do. But recently I’ve started going through the Faith5 once a week with my cousin and have appreciated the opportunity to share about my week, how God has been working, and know that my prayers are being held up to God by someone else.” - **Holly Andersen**



**FAITH5** is a simple, easy-to-implement faith practice, perfect for incorporating into your small groups, Bible studies, and evening routine for five to fifteen minutes. When done over time, the FAITH5 carries the power to enrich communication, deepen understanding, aid sleep, and promote mental, physical and spiritual health. The five steps are:

**SHARE** *your highs and lows* **Share** your highs and lows opens up communication and lets others see how they can be encouraging you and praying for you. You may start off sharing more surface level, but hopefully over time you will grow to share things that are close to your heart.

**READ** *a Bible verse or story* **Read** a few verses or a story from the Bible and see how much you learn and grow.

**TALK** *about how the Bible reading might relate to your highs and lows* **Talk** about those verses or story you read from the Bible and ask how they relate to your life. Where do you see God at work in your life?

**PRAY** *for one another's highs and lows* **Pray** could be as simple as, “Dear God, Thank You for our highs and please be with us in our lows.” Or come up with your own words as you pray for one another. Just start talking and don’t forget to listen for all that God wants to share with you as well.

**BLESS** *one another* **Blessing** one another is a great way to share your hopes and dreams for another person. Let’s remind one another that we are loved, valued and cared for by our God as well as by our Christian community. One way to bless each other might be, “(Name), child of God, may you know that you are loved and valued by God as well as by our small group.” You might put your hand on the shoulder of the person you are blessing or make the sign of the cross on their head to remind them of their baptism.

“Every meeting we share highs and lows. One question we try to incorporate is “How do you see God working in your highs and lows?”. We feel it gets us to think about God’s interaction in our life, rather than just making statements about your life. In other words, see God working all the time instead of when we just address Him. We always have a Bible lesson in our meetings, so Bible verses are always looked up and read by all. Talk! Oh we talk A LOT!!!! And giggle and laugh. Uncontrollable sometimes.

We keep a group prayer journal so we can follow up and continue to pray for individuals who we are concerned about or who is missing from the group. And lastly, we bless each other at the end of each meeting. Each blessing usually goes along with the lesson that night.” - **Bonnie Centers**

“Every Wednesday night after H2H group sessions, we meet back at the altar for prays and blessings. I think this is one of the favorite times of the night for the kids. They literally race up to the kneeling boards and ask if they can go first. We all take turns, pouring out our prayers that are heavy on our hearts. Sometimes it’s about an up coming test, or a sick friend, or the latest world news. Their prayers are very touching. After prayers, each leader blesses their group of kids. We bless each child by name, and trace a cross on their forehead. The blessings usually reflect something about lesson of the day. The blessing may be to go and make disciples of all nations, or encourage others, or God has a plan for them. It’s a wonderful way to end the evening.” - **Karen Kelly**

## Connecting “A Disciple \_\_\_\_\_” with the Faith 5

How do the Faith5 connect with our five Disciple characteristics?

**A Disciple...loves, blesses, trusts, grows and goes**

- Loves: Love others and see them through God’s eyes
- Blesses: Daily seek ways to use our blessings from God to bless others
- Trusts: Looking to God’s Word and entrusting our life to God
- Grows: Growing in faith and helping others to do the same
- Goes: God’s hands and feet in the world, sharing the Gospel with everyone

**Faith 5: Share, Read, Talk, Pray, Bless**

- Loves: Share, Bless
- Blesses: Share, Pray, Bless
- Trusts: Read
- Grows: Share, Read, Talk, Pray, Bless
- Goes: Bless



Like so many aspects of growing in faith there are many overlaps - these connections are not intended to be the end-all. Take for example a Disciple Grows - we’ve included each part of the Faith5. Why? Because each help us to grow in faith: sharing what is good and bad, reading God’s Word and talking about it, praying for others and asking them to pray for us, and blessing one another. Another example, a Disciple Blesses. We could easily just match up the Faith5 Blessing and leave it at that. But praying for one another - giving someone the opportunity to pray for you and sharing and listening to one another are also ways to bless. Lastly, a Disciple Goes. How does talking connect to going? Part of being a disciple who goes is knowing and understanding that as disciples we are “sent ones” - God has called us to step out into our world with the message of the gospel. Talking about scripture and about what is going on in our lives can point us toward where God is working, where he is sending us out. If we do not understand that we are uniquely sent, the message of the gospel gets stuck with us.