



This month's Four Keys focus...Caring Conversations

Every family probably has a part of their home that can be considered "holy ground." "Holy ground" is where the caring conversations take place.

Our lives become "holy ground". "Holy ground" can become lost through the loss of time, occasions and places. We need to keep constant vigilance to keep the

"holy ground" in our families.

Families need to spend deliberate time together on "holy ground" listening, speaking, being sensitive to the needs of one another and supporting one another's dreams and aspirations.

Families have the extraordinary power to shape the lives of their children. This happens

through caring conversations. Parents are essential actors in their children's faith journey.

What is your family's "holy ground?" Is it around the dining room table, is it in the family room, or is in the bedroom? Think about where you have caring conversations with your family and how you can keep procession of this "holy ground."

Start a new family tradition...



This year marks the 12th year of Lutheran Night at the Dome! Here is a chance for you to join family and friends for a night of big league fun and excitement. Since 1994, over 57,000 Lutheran of all ages have joined together for an evening of fellowship at the ballpark.

This year's event will be held on Wednesday, August 3rd, the Minnesota Twins vs. the Oakland A's. Game time is

7:10 p.m. Transportation to game will be arranged.

We can reserve reduced rate lower and upper level tickets. Some added extras will be the pre-game on-field ceremony recognizing Lutherans from across the country and the designation of a Twins player as recipient of the Lutheran Church Award.

This year \$1 from every ticket sold will go to Lutheran Social Services to

benefit homeless youth in Minnesota. On any given night in Minnesota, 2800 children and teens are Homeless.

Watch for a sign-up on the bulletin board in the Narthex. Ticket prices vary from \$17.00 (lower reserved) to \$5.00 (upper general). Deadline for ticket reservations is June 15th. Questions?? Call Deb at 252-6203 or email debkr@atonementlutheran.org



"Your faith has made you well."

Luke 17:19

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Four Keys to Nurturing Faith

- *Caring conversations*
- *Family devotions*
- *Family service projects*
- *Building and celebrating family traditions and rituals*

Senior Sending...our FaithLife Milestone for May

Every year our congregation recognizes our high school graduating seniors. This year we have taken a new approach to "Senior Recognition". Our celebration of high school seniors is now called "Senior Sending". This FaithLife Milestone marks a new segment in our graduates' faith journey. Many of them will be leaving home for the first time. Some may remain close but some may be miles away. Some of them are longing for their freedom, some are nervous about what they may encounter in the "outside" world.

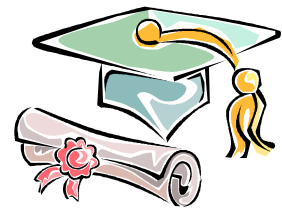
Not only is this a challenging time for our youth but also for their parents. Seeing a child leave home can be heart wrenching. For some parents it will be their first child to leave home, for some the last...making their home very quiet and seem empty.

One way to involve our congregation in this FaithLife Milestone is to celebrate in worship. On Sunday, May 15th, the graduating senior will be honored at the 9:30 worship service. Each student will be reminded of the vows that they made on their Confirmation day and sent out into the world to witness the Good News of Jesus Christ.

2005 Graduates

Tony Baltes
Ashley Bjornstad
Chelsea Brannen
Khanthaly Ditthidet
Marey Erickson
Nastacia Foster
Bob Garner
Paul Hedman-Dennis
Ashley Jepma
Kristen Johnson
Kristopher Johnson
Andrew Kampa
Danielle Klassen

Nicholas Klever
Noah Nelson
Samantha Olson
Liz Plahn
Cara Schlagheck
Neil Siekman
Matthew Simpson
Allison Sleeper
Amanda Zillman
Casey Zimmerman



(As part of this Milestone, the Atonement Quilters have sewn quilts for all our graduates and they will be presented to them in worship. We give thanks for these generous, talented women!)

"While we teach our children all about life, our children teach us what life is all about."

Angela Schwindt

Book of the Month

The Lutheran Handbook Augsburg Fortress Publishers

The essential field guide for all things Lutheran. This enjoyable, easy-to-read, reliable, all-in-one collection helps you understand the essential information about our theology, culture and Lutheran way of life. Organized by Church Stuff, Everyday Stuff and Bible Stuff with

how-to's like "How to Forgive Someone" and lists like "The Top-10 Bible Villains."

This book was published by Augsburg Fortress and released on March 24, 2005. It is already in its second printing. If you are interested in ordering please contact the Church Office. A copy is available for your review.



Sharing your faith... Illness, Loss and Grief

Life is an experience of loss. We experience a deep sense of loss not only through death. Other important losses include growing older and entering a new stage in life, people moving away, illness or injury, divorce, career change, an un-realized hope or expectation, birth, marriage, and many other events that change life as we have known it.

Identifying the variety of ways we experience loss can help us cope more effectively with the pain of daily life and moves into the future with confidence and compassion.

Don't feel guilty about experiencing happiness, joy, and humor in the midst of grief.

Things to do

- List the ways you experience a sense of loss in your life.
 - Share your losses with God in prayer.
 - Read the Psalms. One third are "laments" and are examples of how faithful people have shared their pain, anger, and frustration with God.
 - Talk about your loss and grief with supportive friends and family.
 - Expect each person to grieve in their own way. We all experience loss and grief differently.
- Don't put yourself on a grief recovery schedule, feeling you've failed by not being over it in a year.
 - Grief is not a smooth, even process, uniformly moving in the direction of healing. Instead, expect it to be a jagged route, sometimes feeling like you've returned to an earlier stage, a fresher, more acute grief.
 - If you ever feel stuck, see professional help.
 - Never discount your loss by comparing it to the pain, grief, or loss of others.

(From the Youth & Family Institute)

FaithLife Exercise: Basketful of Prayers

Many churches invite worshipers to write prayer requests and leave them in the offering plate. (*At Atonement we have a "Prayer Bowl" that is located in the Narthex.*) Then, the prayer team gathers weekly to pray over these requests.

Groups or families can do the same thing. Each person writes a prayer request on an index card and places it in a basket. The cards can either be signed or left anonymous. Ask everyone to pull a card from the basket, exchanging it if it is his or

her own. Take turns praying for the requests. The basket could also be left out so that prayer requests could be deposited at any time.

To start your own family tradition you can do a variation of the "Basketful of Prayers." Instead of using a basket try something else; a sombrero from a Mexican mission trip, a favorite ball cap, a plastic sand pail, a special candy dish, or anything else that holds a special meaning for your family.



Coming Events...

Saturday, May 7 - Mother/Daughter Luncheon

Sunday, May 8 - Mother's Day Brunch

Sunday, May 15 - Senior Sending

Sunday, June 5 - SrHi Car Wash

June 20-23 - Vacation Bible School

June 25 - Senior High Youth to Valley Fair

July 25-28 - Day Camp