



# Faith in Action: Confirming One's Faith

## Dear Parish Pal!

Grace...God's message of grace is for all. The work of the church is to welcome all, without exception, into communities of grace.

**Biblical Basis:** *"Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me."*  
Mark 9:37

*"When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, 'Zaccheaus, hurry and come down; for I must stay at your house. So he came down and welcomed him gladly.'" Luke 19:5-6*

**Rationale:** It is certainly the state of humankind to gravitate to those we know. The stranger is usually seen as suspect rather than seeing the stranger as if they were Christ. We seek out affinity groups and people just like we are and that is most often the rule and not the exception. Youth ministry by its very nature is one of these affinity groups.

Jesus demonstrated hospitality to us in many encounters where he welcomed the unimaginable in very concrete, imaginable ways. Jesus lived it. He invites and welcomes us into a relationship with him that frees us to live like welcoming people.

The welcoming that Jesus teaches goes way beyond just greeting someone at the door. It is welcoming a guest or stranger **and** tending to their needs. It is welcoming someone **and** continuing to take responsibility for them. It is welcoming even those different than yourself **and** going out of your way to accompany them and to hear their story. This is what Jesus modeled.

If the adults who work with the youth in the church setting have a spirit of hospitality, it is highly likely that young people will develop welcoming traits and share that same value with others.

If every youth ministry in the congregational context had "Be welcoming as Christ has been welcoming to us" as one of their primary ministry goals and found a way to sincerely live it out, it could transform the community, the entire congregation, and certainly the ministry to its youth.

When a Jesus-patterned, genuine sense of hospitality is a faith community norm, this is what it could look like:

- Where you live and what you drive is immaterial and Jesus' love for all becomes real.
- Hair and skin color do not matter, for we are in Christ and we are new creations.
- Your family name gives neither credit or discredit to who you are, for Christ calls you "mine."
- The honor roll or the GPA you claim is inconsequential, for God's gift of grace is freely given.
- Forgiveness and reconciliation is standard, not an exception and we understand how the Spirit intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words to express.
- A door of welcome opens in all sorts of ways...we welcome, we are the welcomed, we seek, we are found, we transform, we are transformed, we see Jesus, we show Jesus, and we toss the "Closed" sign in the recycling bin.

**What can be more welcoming than God's grace?  
God's grace lived out! Having that very grace at work  
in us, through us, among us so that we treat and see  
each other as if they were Christ,  
now that is welcoming!**

I am here to support you as you support your Faith in Action youth during their journey this fall. If you have any questions, concerns, exciting moments, or suggestions along the way, I would appreciate hearing from you. **Yours in Christ,**

*Brianna Hanson*



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## Ideas to Connect with Your Parish Pal:

### Connect with Your Pal's Parent(s)

Your pal has just started 8th, 9th or 10th grade. Check in with your pal's parental figure(s) and see how the start of the school year is going for them. Some questions you could ask include:

- ⇒ What are some things you have noticed about your teen lately that you really enjoy?
- ⇒ What is something new that you are learning as a parent during this phase?
- ⇒ What makes your teen different from all other kids in their grade right now?
- ⇒ In order for me to be an affirming Pal to your teen, we need time together. What are some times during your week/month when it would be best to connect this fall?
- ⇒ It's impossible to consistently love someone as challenging as a teen unless you have a little time to yourself. What can I do to support you so you can refuel so you are able to give your teen the love they need?
- ⇒ Can I pray with/for you today?

### Send Correspondence

Check out the Taking Faith Home resources to give you inspiration for connecting with your Parish Pal. Correspond in a way that you are comfortable with, be it email, postcard, text, letter or phone conversation. These resources are rooted in the scripture connected to worship in September.

### Prayer

What you do over time matters! Commit to a time once a week to open your Parish Pal Prayer Jar, take out a treat to eat and pray for your Parish Pal. You started with 52 pieces in your prayer jar to support you in the habit of praying for your Pal weekly. As of Sept. 11th, we are 37 weeks into this 52 week year. Let's make each week count. If you would like a script to help you say or write your prayers, check out the templates in this newsletter.

## Upcoming Opportunities

Sept 19	9:00am.....In Person Worship
Sept 26	9:00am.....In Person Worship 4:00pm.....Bishop Installation Watch Party
Sept 29	6:30pm.....Faith in Action Kick Off
Oct 3	9:00am.....In Person Worship
Oct 10	9:00am.....In Person Worship
Oct 17	9:00am.....In Person Worship
<b>Oct 23</b>	<b>6:30pm.....Confirmation Banquet</b>
Oct 24	9:00am.....In Person Worship
<b>Oct 31</b>	<b>9:00am.....Confirmation Service</b>
<b>Nov 3</b>	<b>@ 5:30pm.....Parish Pals Dinner 6:00-7:00pm...Game Night</b>

## Our Mission

**EMBRACE** everyone in the oneness of Christ.

**EQUIP** God's people to grow in Faith.

**RESPOND** by serving all Creation.

## Contact Information

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## Week of Prayer & Scripture:

God, open my eyes so that I might see you more clearly, savor, you more fully, and share you more freely.

### Day 1

*We share life with people around us by talking to them about things that matter to us, and to them. In the same way, we share life with God by talking to God about things that matter to us, and to God. Even though we can't see God, we can talk to God through prayer.*

*"The eyes of the Lord watch over those who do right, and his ears are open to their prayers." 1 Peter 3:12*

**Thank you God for wanting me to talk to you...**

### Day 2

*God can hear us when we say our prayers out loud or when we talk to God from our hearts. If we say them out loud or whisper them, it might help us keep our minds on what we want to say to God.*

*God has promised to hear the prayers of all people. "I love the Lord because God hears my voice and my prayer for mercy."*

*Psalms 116:1*

**I love you Lord ...**



**We need consistent encouragement to move past daily distractions and commit to a regular time of prayer.**



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## Week of Prayer & Scripture:

God, open my eyes so that I might see you more clearly, savor, you more fully, and share you more freely.

### Day 3

*We don't have to use special words when we pray. We can talk to God like we talk to another person we love and respect. It makes God happy when we talk to God in that way. But one special word that we often use is "amen" at the end of our prayer.*

*We say "amen" to show that we believe God has heard our prayer and will respond in God's perfect way.*

*"When you pray, don't babble on and on ... for your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask him!" Matthew 6:7-8*

**I love to talk to you God, the same way I talk to my friends and my family...**

### Day 4

*We can pray with our eyes shut tight or with our eyes wide open. Praying with our eyes closed can help us to focus on God. Our hands can be folded, or lifted up, or holding someone else's hand. We can bow our heads or look up to the sky. We can stand, or kneel on the floor, or sit in a chair, what matters most is our minds are set on God and our hearts love God.*

*"I will praise you as long as I live, lifting up my hands to you in prayer." Psalm 63:4*

**God I pray for my Pal...**



God doesn't care if your prayer is long or short,  
eloquent or inarticulate, or clever or clumsy.  
God hears your heart.



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God, open my eyes so that I might see you more clearly, savor, you more fully, and share you more freely.

### Day 5

*God wants us to talk to God about everything. God wants us to talk to God about the things that make us feel concerned, and the things that bring us joy. God wants us to ask for what we need and give thanks for everything God has done for us. Nothing is too small or too big to talk to God about in prayer.*

*"Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done."  
Philippians 4:6*

**God I want to talk to you about...**

### Day 6

*When we don't know what to pray, the Holy Spirit helps us. The Spirit helps us understand the Bible so we know what God wants. The Spirit shows us the sins we need to confess and the ways we need to change. When we forget to pray or fall asleep when we're praying, we can be sure that the Holy Spirit has not forgotten or fallen asleep. The Holy Spirit is praying for us right now.*

*"...the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words." Romans 8:26*

**God thank you for the Holy Spirit,  
who helps me pray when I don't  
know what to say...**



The God of the universe invites us to talk with Him at anytime and anywhere about anything and everything.



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## Week of Prayer & Scripture:

God, open my eyes so that I might see you more clearly, savor, you more fully, and share you more freely.

### Day 7

*God wants us to share everything with God. So when we're frustrated, we can tell God all about it. When we feel proud, we can tell God that too. The best thing about telling God how we feel is that talking to God can change how we feel. When we tell God that we are impatient, God helps us put our trust in God. When we tell God, You seem far away, God helps us know that God's Spirit is near.*

*"Even when I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me." Psalm 23:4*

**God I'm so glad to know that I can be honest with you about how I really feel...**

**What are your goals as a faith mentor this month?**

**How will you hold yourself accountable?**

*List your next actionable steps*