



Faith Formation for Every Adult in Your Church—It's Possible Today!

John Roberto

What would it be like if your church embraced the audacious claim that you could provide faith formation for every adult in your faith community? What new insights and assumptions about adult faith formation would you need to adopt? What would a “faith formation for every adult” plan look like? Where could you possibly find all of the leaders and resources to offer faith formation for every adult in your church? What would it be like if you conceptualized adult faith formation, not as a series of program offerings, but as a adult learning resources system—a diverse community of learning?

Most Christian churches have similar goals for adult faith formation. Churches want faith formation for adults that helps them to grow in their relationship with God, develop a deeper understanding of the Bible and their faith tradition, relate the Christian faith to life today, participate in the life and ministries of the faith community, and live as disciples of Jesus Christ in their daily life at home, in the workplace, in the community and the world. Churches want faith formation that touches the head, the heart, and actions of adults. They want faith formation that informs, forms, and transforms.

The question today is not what do we want to accomplish, but rather how can accomplish these goals for every adult in our faith communities. It's all about delivery systems. How can we utilize the life of our church community; the variety of excellent print, audio, and visual resources; the variety of learning models; and the new digital and online technologies to develop a faith formation plan that addresses the wide diversity of interests, religious and spiritual needs, and life tasks and situations of today's adults. This article describes the concept of an “Adult Faith Formation Learning Resources System” as a way to provide faith formation for every adult in your church and offers practical tools to help you build a learning resource system in your church.

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Part 1. Four Principles of an Adult Faith Formation Learning Resources System

1. Adult faith formation addresses the diverse life tasks and situations, spiritual and religious needs, and interests of adults in the church by offering a variety of content topics and learning activities out of which adults can develop their own personalized learning pathway.

To address the increasing diversity within the adult population, churches need to offer a greater variety of adult faith formation topics and activities. In the past churches have often chosen the “one size fits all” mentality for adult faith formation: How do we get every adult to participate in a small faith sharing group or to come to the Lenten series or to study the Bible? Adult faith formation is no longer about finding *the* program to attract all adults. It is about addressing the diversity of adult learning needs with a variety of faith formation activities. It is offering faith formation programming that is varied in content, expectations, depth, involvement, and timing. It is meeting individuals at the point of their spiritual and learning needs and offering personalized pathways of faith growth. Adults can create their individual “faith growth learning plans” to help them identify where they are on their spiritual journey, what they need, who else might share that need, and the resources that could help them meet that need. By expanding the options for adult learning (offering “something for everyone”), churches can engage more adults in faith formation, even if some of the offerings involve only one person.

Today, as never before, a local church has access to adult faith formation programming, resources, and networks, that can address the diversity. Resources for learning abound in every environment; a primary task of a learning system is to identify these resources and link learners with them effectively. Consider this: iTunes University, part of the iTunes Store, is possibly the world’s greatest collection of free educational media available to students, teachers, and lifelong learners. With over 200,000 educational audio and video files available, iTunes U has quickly become the engine for the mobile learning movement. It puts

courses and resources from over 150 universities and learning organizations into the hands of individuals, groups, and organizations. The new reality of faith formation programming is that churches can offer activities that cater to niches— individuals and small groups with a particular spiritual or religious need, interest, passion, concern, or life issue. They no longer have to worry about reaching a “mass audience.”

The culture of our day is all about personalization and customization. We have moved from a “one size fits all” mentality in our culture and economics. Several decades ago the typical bookstore at the mall featured several dozen books on the NY Times best seller lists, books by popular bestselling authors, and a very limited variety of specialized titles. In the early 1990s Borders and Barnes and Noble opened megastores with 100,000 titles that addressed a wide diversity of customers’ needs and interests. In 1995 Amazon.com opened for business online with millions of titles, addressing an even greater diversity of readers’ needs and interests. Amazon.com will even recommend books to you based on the interests expressed in your previous book purchases.

The same personalization and customization can be seen in music and in films. More than 99 percent of music albums on the market today are not available in Wal-Mart. However, iTunes offers millions of songs online available for download 24x7, and is constantly adding music, both old and new. Of the more than 200,000 films, TV shows, documentaries, and other videos that have been released commercially, the average Blockbuster store carries just 3,000 titles. However, Netflix has over 100,000 DVDs available for rental online and delivered to your home in about one business day. By offering such great diversity Amazon.com, iTunes, and Netflix not only make money on the “blockbusters” they sell/rent, but also on every title in their vast storehouse, even if they only sell/rent one copy a month. (Amazon.com, iTunes, and Netflix are only three examples of the transformation taking place in business and culture today.)

By consulting research findings and listening carefully to adults of different age groups, church leaders can determine foundational spiritual and religious needs, interests, and life tasks that adult faith formation should address. Using this knowledge, churches can expand their faith formation programming to offer enough variety that each adult in the faith community can find a learning experience that addresses his or her spiritual and religious needs, life tasks, and/or interests. Consider using the

following categories to identify the needs and interests of adults in your church.

- **Life Issues:** What's happening in the lives and world of adults today and how does the Christian faith connect to these issues? How can faith formation help adults view the myriad dimensions of human life today—family, work, leisure, relationships, sexuality, suffering and grief, social and political issues, community issues—in the light of the Gospel and faith tradition? How can faith formation equip and support adults in making life choices and moral decisions as Christians?
- **Life Tasks:** What are the developmental life tasks facing adults in the major life periods: 20s-30s, 40s-50s, 60s-70s, 80s-90s? How can faith formation integrate continued faith growth with life tasks at each stage of adulthood?
- **Milestones and Transitions:** What are the significant milestones/transitions in adulthood that can be a focus of adult faith formation, such as geographic relocations, family formation and re-formation, career changes, empty nests, retirement, unanticipated illness, divorce, and the loss of loved ones? How can faith formation help people find meaning in their lives during these transitions and bring a faith perspective to the transitions adults are experiencing?
- **Religious Needs:** What are the significant religious learning needs of adults at each stage of adulthood? How can faith formation provide adults with opportunities to deepen their understanding of the Bible and their faith tradition and beliefs, and relate their Christian faith to life today?
- **Spiritual Needs:** What are the significant spiritual needs of adults at each stage of adulthood? How can faith formation assist adults in growing in their relationship with God and in living as disciples of Jesus Christ in their daily life at home, in the workplace, in the community and the world? How can faith formation deepen adults' practice of the spiritual disciplines and traditions in their daily lives?

- **Ethnic/Cultural Needs:** Who are the ethnic/cultural communities in your church? What are the unique lived experiences, needs, and aspirations of people from each ethnic/cultural community in your church? How can your church offer *culturally-specific* adult faith formation for each ethnic/cultural community in the church, and, when appropriate, in the language of the people? How can faith formation be *inclusive* of the traditions, heritages, and unique gifts of each ethnic/cultural community in your church?

2. Adult faith formation recognizes that learning is a process of active inquiry with initiative residing in the adult learner and that adults are motivated to learn as they experience needs and interests that adult learning activities will satisfy.

A core principle of adult learning is that *learning is an process of active inquiry with initiative residing in the adult learner*. Adults prefer to determine their *own* learning experiences. The traditional model of schooling has conditioned adults to perceive the proper role of learners as being dependent on teachers to make decisions for them as to what should be learned, how it should be learned, when it should be learned, and if it has been learned. Increasingly today's adult learners are knowledge workers. They are accustomed to searching out what they want to know, when they want and need to know it. People are becoming more and more self-directed in their learning, and they have almost unlimited access to information through the Internet and the wide variety of print and media learning resources available in our society today.

Research studies on adult learning point to motivation as a key factor in determining whether or not adults will participate in an adult faith formation offering. *The key motivation in adult learning is that adults are motivated to learn as they experience needs and interests that adult learning activities will satisfy*. The research tells us to be aware of a variety of adult motivations and design learning activities that utilize these motivational factors.

- Adults are motivated to learn when *facing life transitions*. They seek learning and support to cope with changes in their lives that give rise

to new developmental tasks, e.g., raising children, aging parents, financial matters, job changes, divorce, etc.

- Adults are motivated to learn when there is a *gap* between their present level of understanding, skill, performance and/or growth and the desired level or goal that they set for themselves or that their organization/ community expects of them.
- Adults are motivated by appealing to personal and spiritual growth and/or personal benefits.
- Adults are motivated to learn when they identify they have a need to learn.
- Adults are motivated to learn when the benefits of a learning experience outweigh their resistance.
- Adults are motivated to participate in adult learning programs that are enjoyable and enriching.
- Adults are motivated to learn when they have the opportunity to do something they could not do before.
- Adults are motivated to learn by settings that have a natural, interactive, communal feel. They want to be treated and seated as adults in the physical settings where they gather.
- Adults are motivated to learn when programs are sensitive to their time constraints by keeping commitments short in terms of duration and offering choices of times for participation.

3. Adult faith formation views learning as a lifelong process that involves both formal and informal learning, intentional or unexpected.

Learning is a lifelong process and adult learners need access to a wide variety of learning activities throughout life. We are a society of lifelong learners. Learning in adulthood is now taken as normative. Over the 12 month period from Spring 2004-2005 (the latest year statistics are available), 44 percent of adults in the U.S. reported having participated in *formal* adult educational activities, excluding full-time only enrollments in college/university or vocational/technical credential programs. The 44 % percent of adults who participated in formal adult educational activities were divided almost equally between work-related courses (27% of all adults in the

U.S.) and personal interest courses (21% of all adults in the U.S.).

By most estimates *informal learning* accounts for more than 70% of adult learning taking place today. Informal learning describes a lifelong process whereby individuals acquire attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from daily experience and the educational influences and resources in his or her environment, from family and neighbors, from work and play, from the marketplace, the library, the mass media, and the Internet. Informal learning can be intentional or not. There might be a teacher, but it's probably a colleague or friend. We might read an article or book, visit a website, listen to a podcast, or watch a video online. We might visit Home Depot or Lowe's for a clinic on home repair or gardening or stop by our local bookstore or library for a reading group or special program. On television many channels are devoted to informal learning. The programs of *The Food Network*, while not formal education, promote learning as shows teach people how to cook, try new recipes, etc. The variety of home improvement, such as the "This Old House" on PBS, or the extreme home makeover shows on the TLC and HGTV networks, promote learning, even though they are not formal educational TV programs.

Formal and informal learning can be *intentional*—when an individual aims to learn something and goes about achieving that objective or *unexpected*—when in the course of everyday activities an individual learns something that he or she had not intended or expected.

Applying the four types of learning to adult faith formation, we can visualize the relationship among these four types of learning in the following way.

Formal Learning	
classes speaker series workshops online courses small group Bible study	self-study Bible study social media/networking faith-sharing groups
Intentional	Unexpected
reading mentoring service/mission activity program at the library or local bookstore	internet surfing playing watching a movie TV show shopping at a home improvement store
Informal Learning	

Most of the adult faith formation efforts in churches are *formal* and *intentional* learning through organized programs. Churches can expand their faith formation efforts by promoting all four types of learning. For example, Sunday worship is *informal* and *intentional* learning. A church can help adults learn from their participation in worship through a weekly journal (online and in print) with reflection questions on the Scripture readings and the sermon. The readings and sermon can also be available in print or audio for further study on the church's website. The journal could also be used in a weekly faith sharing group or in table discussion after Sunday worship. These are all examples of informal and intentional learning activities.

4. Adult faith formation utilizes a variety of learning models to address the diverse life tasks and situations, religious and spiritual needs, and interests of adults; and incorporates both face-to-face, interactive learning activities and virtual, online learning activities.

We know from research that adult learners will choose the learning activity that best fits their learning needs, preferred modes of learning, and time constraints. In order to accomplish this, an adult faith formation needs to provide a variety of content and learning activities, and a variety of program models for learning that include learning activities in physical places and virtual spaces. Five models that should be part of adult faith formation include:

- **Learning on Your Own** (through reading, online courses, audio and video programs, movies, television programs)
- **Learning in Small Groups** (through Bible and theology study groups, social issues study groups, faith sharing groups, lectionary-based groups, service/mission action groups, support groups, special interest groups)
- **Learning in Large Groups** (through courses, speaker series, workshops, film festivals, retreats, conferences, intergenerational programs)

- **Learning in the Congregation** (through Sunday worship, church year events and celebrations, service/mission activities, ministry and leadership in the church and community)
- **Learning in the Community and World** (through programs/courses/clinics/workshops/presentations at universities, retreat centers, YMCAs, libraries, bookstores, regional church programs; through engagement in community/political action, local and global service/justice organizations and projects)

Adult faith formation includes learning activities in physical places and virtual spaces, blending face-to-face, interactive learning with virtual, online learning. Online websites, social networking services, and digital technologies (e.g., an iPod Touch, smart cell phones) mean that churches can deliver faith formation experiences and resources anytime and anywhere, reaching people wherever they go online (home, work, school, vacation, coffee house). The interplay between learning in physical places and virtual online spaces can revolutionize adult faith formation in a church.

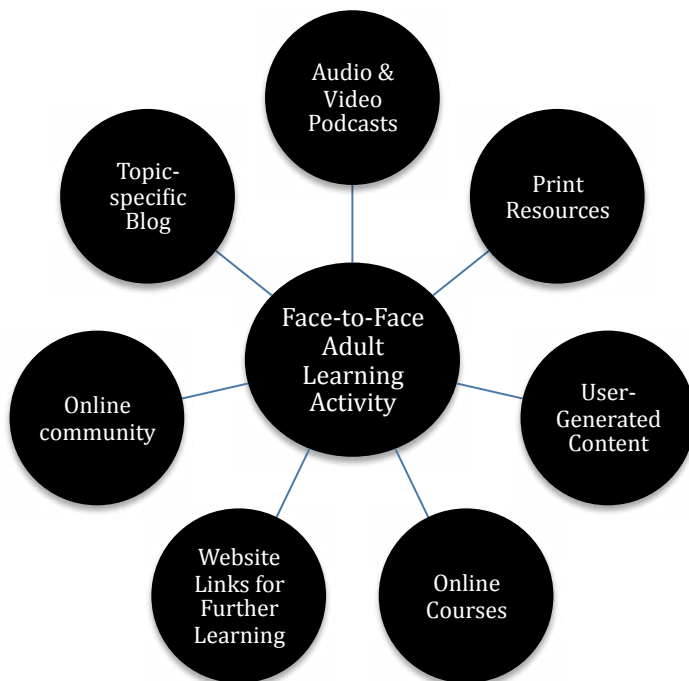
There are two ways to envision the relationship between the physical and virtual. The first approach begins with people's participation in face-to-face learning activities (small group, large group, congregation, community/world) and then uses virtual online spaces (learning activities, print/audio/video, social networking) to extend, deepen, and support the learning that began in the physical program. For example, a church sponsors a three-session program on the Gospel of Luke in preparation for Cycle C of the upcoming liturgical year. The learning from this short program can be extended and deepened online with 1) weekly commentaries on the Sunday Gospel from Luke, 2) online Bible study program (independent or with a small group) on the Gospel of Luke, 3) a university course on the Gospel of Luke on iTunes U, and 4) an online blog that allows people to post their reflections on each Sunday's reading and invites discussion online.

The second approach begins with people's involvement in online/digital learning activities and leads them to participate in face-to-face learning activities. For example, a church uses its website to develop an online spiritual formation center using a

variety of already existing resources: 1) daily fixed hour prayer (liturgy of the hours), 2) weekly and seasonal prayer resources, 3) links to prayer sites around the world (www.sacredspace.ie, www.taize.fr, www.upperroom.org), 4) an online retreat (*A 34 week retreat for Everyday Life* from Creighton University, <http://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/cmo-retreat.html>), and 5) online courses with spiritual guides like Thomas Merton, Joyce Rupp, Henri Nouwen, Joan Chittister from Spirituality and Practice (www.SpiritualityandPractice.com): 40-day retreats with daily emails containing short readings for reflection, practice suggestions, and access to a private “Practice Circle” where people can share their wisdom and experiences with other e-course participants.

The online spiritual formation center could connect people to church-based learning activities and resources, such as a relationship with a spiritual director, a spiritual formation course (such as the small group program *Companions in Christ* from Upper Room Books), a retreat experience at church or a retreat center, a series of workshops on the spiritual disciplines (e.g., *Lectio Divina*, silence, contemplation, the Examen, meditation, spiritual reading, fixed hour prayer), etc.

These relationships between adult faith formation in physical places and virtual spaces can be visualized in the following way:



One example of this integrated approach to adult faith formation is *Bible with Brian* from Ginghamburg Church in Ohio. Brian Brown, the teaching pastor at Ginghamburg, teaches through the entire Bible in a year, including practical application on how to live out God’s truths everyday. Every Tuesday and Wednesday nights, “Bible with Brian” follows the book of the Bible featured in the daily *Transformation Journal* produced by the church. The journal is centered around a weekly topic and provides Bible verses about that topic, wisdom about the day’s study from authors, and questions to help people apply the reading to their daily life. The Bible study begins with a meal from 5:30-6:30 p.m. and then the program from 6:30-8 p.m. or 7-8:30 p.m. Children’s care and activities for birth through grade 5 are available. In addition to the gathered program, the program is available as an MP3 audio file so people can listen to it online or download to their computer or MP3 player. Adults can also subscribe to the podcast on iTunes and listen to current and past episodes. Adults can download the “Bible with Brian” handout and use it to follow along with the audio broadcast of the program. People can also subscribe to the “Bible with Brian Spiritual Vitamins” newsletter—a daily take on the *Transformation Journal* from Brian Brown. (For more information go to <http://ginghamsburg.org/biblewithbrian>.)

A Summary of Key Features

In summary, an Adult Faith Formation Learning Resources System needs to:

1. Include a variety of content topics and learning activities in order to address addresses the diverse life tasks and situations, spiritual and religious needs, and interests of adults in the church.
2. Guide adults in developing their own personalized learning pathway.
3. Recognizes that the initiative for learning resides in the adult learner.
4. Incorporate four types of learning: formal and informal, intentional and unexpected.
5. Utilize a variety of learning models: learning on your own, in small groups, in large groups, in the congregation, and in the community and world.
6. Provide learning activities in physical spaces (face-to-face) and virtual places (online).

Part 2. Designing an Adult Faith Formation Learning Resources System for Your Church

The goal of the design process is to guide your church in developing and implementing a plan for an Adult Faith Formation Resources System for all of the adults in your church (and community), utilizing a wide variety of learning activities and resources.

Task 1. Form an Adult Faith Formation Task Force

Develop an “Adult Faith Formation Task Force” consisting of 1) church staff and faith formation leaders, 2) at least one adult from each of the decades of adulthood (20s, 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s, 70s, 80s+), and 3) church members who are involved in the different forms of adult education in your community. The Task Force is responsible for designing an adult faith formation plan, organizing the implementation logistics, finding leaders and resources for the plan, monitoring progress, and conducting evaluations. The Task Force needs a coordinator/convenor who facilitates the work of the Task Force in designing an adult faith formation plan, organizing implementation logistics, finding leaders and resources to implement the plan, monitoring progress and conducting evaluations, and serving as a liaison between the task force and the church and wider community.

Task 2. Prepare a Statement of Your Church’s Vision and Goals for Adult Faith Formation

Work together as a Task Force to prepare a short statement of your church’s vision and goals for adult faith formation. Most Christian churches have similar goals for adult faith formation. Churches want faith formation for adults that helps them to grow in their relationship with God, develop a deeper understanding of the Bible and their faith tradition, relate the Christian faith to life today, participate in the life and ministries of the faith community, and live as disciples of Jesus Christ in their daily life at

home, in the workplace, in the community and the world. Churches want faith formation that touches the head, the heart, and actions of adults. They want faith formation that informs, forms, and transforms.

Together as a team review the important documents on the vision and goals for adult faith formation in your denomination. You might want to invite a guest speaker to present a workshop on the goals and vision of adult faith formation or find a video presentation. You can contact your diocese/synod/regional church body for suggestions.

Task 3. Develop an Inventory of Your Church’s Current Adult Faith Formation Programming

Develop an inventory of your church’s current adult faith formation activities and programs. The inventory is developed around the five basic adult learning models: 1) learning on your own, 2) learning in small groups, 3) learning in large groups, 4) learning in the congregation, and 5) learning in the community and world. Use the format outlined on the worksheet to organize your inventory. After completing the inventory, discuss the state of your church’s adult faith formation:

- What are the strengths in your current adult faith formation? What are the weaknesses?
- What is most effective in your current programming? What is not?
- Which of the five adult learning models are being used most effectively? Which are not?
- Who is being served by current adult faith formation programming? Who is not?
- Where are the greatest needs or gaps? What are the priority areas for growth and improvement?

Task 4. Research the Life Issues and Learning Needs of Adults in Your Church

1. Research and Discussion

Discuss the important issues and learning needs of the adults in your church using the following questions. Feel free to adapt these questions and add your own.

- **Life Issues:** What's happening in the lives and world of adults in your church today: family, work, leisure, relationships, sexuality, suffering and grief, social and political issues, community issues, etc.?
- **Life Tasks:** What are the developmental life tasks facing adults in the major life periods: 20s-30s, 40s-50s, 60s-70s, 80s-90s?
- **Milestones and Transitions:** What are the significant milestones/transitions that adults in your church are experiencing, such as geographic relocations, family formation and re-formation, career changes, empty nests, retirement, unanticipated illness, divorce, loss of loved ones, etc.?
- **Religious Needs:** What are the significant religious learning needs of adults in your church, such as understanding the Bible and relating it today, understanding the faith tradition and beliefs and how to live them today, making Christian moral decisions, etc.
- **Spiritual Needs:** What are the significant spiritual needs of adults in your church, such as growing in their relationship with God; living as disciples of Jesus Christ in their daily life at home, in the workplace, in the community and the world; spiritual disciplines and traditions; prayer, etc.?
- **Ethnic/Cultural Needs:** What are the unique lived experiences, needs, and aspirations of people from each ethnic/cultural community in your church?

2. Focus Groups

Organize focus groups of 6-12 people in each of the following age groups of adulthood: 1) 20-30, 2) 40-50, 3) 60-75, and 4) 75+. Be sure to select a diversity of adults who reflect the ethnic and socio-economic character of your church, and the various states in life (single, married, divorced, etc.) Use the following questions as the basis of your focus group interviews (see worksheet). Feel free to adapt the questions to your church.

1. How would you describe your age group in key words or phrases?
2. What are some of the key life tasks that your age group is experiencing?
3. What are some of the important life issues that your age group is experiencing today?

4. What are the most meaningful experiences you have in life? What makes these experiences meaningful to you?
5. How important is your relationship with God? Why?
6. Where do you experience God most?
7. What are the significant spiritual issues that your age group is experiencing today?
8. What is most important to you about being a Christian (or your particular faith tradition) today?
9. How do you live your Christian faith? Name some of the ways you put your faith into practice.
10. How can the church help you to continue growing as a Christian? Be specific. Name some of the things you would like to see your church offer for adults?

3. A Profile of Life Issues and Learning Needs

Based on the results of your research, discussion, and focus group interviews, develop a profile of the life issues and learning needs of adults in your church.

Complete your research by identifying *the most important life issues and learning needs your church's adult faith formation should address in the coming year(s)* for each age group: 1) 20-30, 2) 40-50, 3) 60-75, and 4) 75+.

Task 5. Research Learning Activities, Leaders, and Resources to Address the Important Life Issues and Learning Needs

Today, as never before, a local church has access to an abundance of adult faith formation programming, resources, and networks that can address the diversity of adult learning needs. Resources for learning abound in every environment; a primary task of a learning system is to identify these resources and link learners with them effectively.

Using the list of the most important life issues and learning needs as a guide, research the resources available to your church that will address these needs and eventually become part of your Adult Faith Formation Learning Resources System (see worksheet). Consider the following categories:

- **People Resources:** Conduct a gifts/talents/skills/knowledge survey of the people resources in your church, the wider community, the diocese/synod/regional

church body, colleges and universities, church-related organizations, etc. who can be invited to take a leadership role in the adult faith formation plan. Consider people who teach courses or specialized programs, guest presenters on specialized topics, leaders for small groups and Bible studies, prayer guides/spiritual directors, leaders for service/mission programs, etc.

- **Physical, Face-to-Face Learning Activity Resources:** Identify face-to-face learning activities that you can use to address the priority issues and learning needs. There are a variety of options: 1) programs that your church is already sponsoring, 2) an opportunity that you are not utilizing (e.g., design reflection activities around Sunday worship), 3) a new program that your church can adopt, and 4) a program that you can promote as part of your plan and encourage adult participation. Consider programs in your church, the wider community, the diocese/synod/regional church body, retreat and conference centers, colleges and universities, church-related organizations, etc. Indicate the learning model(s) used in the program: Learning on Your Own, Learning in Small Group, Learning in Large Group, Learning in the Congregation, and/or Learning in the Community and World.
- **Print and Media Learning Activity Resources:** Identify print and media resources from publishers and learning organizations that you can use to address the priority issues and learning needs. Indicate the learning model(s) used in the resource.
- **Online Learning Activity Resources:** Identify online learning activity resources that you can use to address the priority issues and learning needs. Indicate the learning model(s) used in the resource,

After you have completed your research, review your work to determine if there are priority life issues and learning needs for which your church will need to design new programming.

Task 6. Design and Implement Your Adult Faith Formation Learning Resources System Plan

Use the following process to move from research on learning resources to a final Adult Faith Formation Plan that you can implement. You may find it helpful to review adult faith formation plans from other churches before you begin. Here are four examples:

- Ginghamburg Church (Ohio) (<http://ginghamsburg.org/adult>)
- Willowcreek Church (Illinois) (<http://classes.willowcreek.org>)
- Holy Infant Church (North Carolina) (www.holyinfantchurch.org/faith_development_spirituality)
- The United Methodist Church of the Resurrection (Kansas) (www.cor.org/programs-ministries/thejourney)

1. Timeframe

Decide on the timeframe for your final plan. Will it be a plan for the whole year or will you develop seasonal plans (Fall, Winter-Spring, and Summer)?

2. Development of Integrated Adult Faith Formation Learning Activity Plans

Use the research on learning activities, leaders, and resources, to create Adult Faith Formation Learning Activity Plans that address each of the important life issues and learning needs (see worksheet). Decide which learning activities you will incorporate in your plan. You will also need to determine if there are priority needs for which there are no program resources. The team will need to design new programs to address these needs.

A Learning Activity Plan addresses a life issue or learning need with learning opportunities and resources using the five learning models:

1. learning on your own
2. learning in small groups
3. learning in large groups
4. learning in the congregation
5. learning in the community/world

A Learning Activity Plan incorporates a variety of options for learning in face-to-face, physical places and in virtual, online spaces.

- **Physical:** church, homes, coffee shop, colleges, service/mission sites, retreat centers, monasteries, theaters, community sites, etc.
- **Online:** audio and video podcasts, print resources, online courses, website links for further learning, online community and social networking, topic-specific blogs, etc.

For example, an Adult Faith Formation Learning Activity Plan for Lent on the church-wide theme of repentance and conversion, could have the following learning activities:

- book of Scripture readings, reflections, and prayers for each day of Lent (print and online)
- all of the sermons/homilies during Lent focus on repentance and conversion and are available online in MP3 files with a personal and small group study guide
- daily Bible reading, reflections, and prayer are emailed to all of the adults in the church and are available online
- a Sunday morning Bible study on the Lenten lectionary readings is offered after Sunday worship service; an online group meets during the week to study and reflect on the readings
- a guest speaker presents a two-evening program on repentance and conversion in the Christian life during the first two weeks of Lent; the program is video-taped and available online in a podcast with a study guide
- a retreat day on the theme of conversion is conducted at the local retreat house the week prior to Holy Week; for those who cannot attend an online retreat experience is offered
- resources for Lenten study and reflection are available online
- a reconciliation service is offered during the third week of Lent

Each Adult Faith Formation Learning Activity Plan seeks to incorporate a variety of ways to learn: differing levels of depth and commitment, a variety of learning models reflecting the diversity of learning styles, online and face-to-face learning, and times and locations that are convenient for adults. This approach means that adults can have a variety of ways to learn a topic, removing many

of the more common obstacles to adult learning in churches.

3. Balance

Review each Adult Formation Learning Activity Plan to make sure you have balance among the five learning models (on your own, small group, large group, in the congregation, in the community/world) and between learning in physical places and in virtual spaces.

4. Leadership

Using the research you conducted into people resources, identify leaders who will be involved in coordinating/conducting/facilitating individual learning activities. Determine which learning activities still need leaders and develop a plan for finding and preparing leaders for their role.

5. Church Website

Consider how you will use you church's website as part of your Adult Faith Formation Plan. For example:

- ✓ provide adult formation programming online for adults
- ✓ provide resources for adults to download
- ✓ connect adults to faith formation programs on other websites
- ✓ network adults engaged in faith formation
- ✓ market/advertise adult formation offerings

6. Program Guide

Create an adult faith formation program guide with your annual or seasonal offerings (your "course catalog" and calendar) in print format and online format (PDF, online calendar, etc.). Develop descriptions for every learning activity, indicating clearly the content or focus of the program and the particulars, such as date, location, cost, time, website location, etc.

7. Spiritual/Learning Assessment

Create an assessment tool (with a print and online version) that can help adults in your church assess their spiritual growth and identify their needs for learning. The United Methodist Church of the Resurrection in Leawood, KS has developed a tool to assist adults in their church to assess where they are in their faith journey and their needs of continuing growth and learning (see handout).

We invite you to join us on the greatest journey of your life – The Journey of Knowing, Loving and Serving God – as we strive to become a community of deeply committed Christians. We know that sometimes getting started can be daunting, especially in such a large church, but we want to travel this journey with you. Our Adult Discipleship Ministry offers you a navigation system that provides directions, routes and traveling companions to support and encourage you along the way. We believe that nothing in the world will bring you greater joy, greater challenge and greater meaning than the journey into life as God intended us to live it. To help encourage and equip you for your Journey, we've created the Journey assessment tool.

Visit their website to see their adult faith formation offerings and the assessment tool:
www.cor.org/programs-ministries/thejourney.

8. Marketing

Develop your marketing plan for adult faith formation. Consult the handout, “Marketing Suggestions” for a process and ideas. United Methodist Communications has an excellent online guide with a process and practical strategies for developing a marketing plan:
www.umcom.org/site/c.mrLZJ9PFKMG/b.5160951/k.54F3/Church_Marketing_Plan.htm.

9. Evaluate

Develop an evaluation form for each type of learning activity so that you can receive feedback on the quality and effectiveness of the learning activity (see worksheet for examples). These can be done online or in person. Each season schedule a team meeting to review the past season’s offerings, make adjustments and revisions, and plan for the next season.

Worksheets & Handouts

1. An Inventory of Current Faith Formation Programming
2. Researching Adult Life Issues and Learning Needs
3. Adult Faith Formation Interviews
4. Profile of Adult Life Issues and Learning Needs
5. Priority Issues and Learning Needs for Adult Faith Formation
6. Researching Learning Resources
7. Integrated Adult Faith Formation Learning Plans
8. Digital Media and Online Strategies for Adult Faith Formation
9. Spiritual Assessment Tool (The United Methodist Church of the Resurrection)
10. Marketing Suggestions
11. Sample Questions for Evaluating an Adult Learning Activity

Adult Faith Formation Learning Resources System

An Inventory of Current Adult Faith Formation Programming

Use this format to develop an inventory of your adult faith formation programming.

1. Learning on Your Own

- Examples: reading, online courses, audio and video programs, movies, television programs

What are the ways your church promotes and supports Learning on Your Own?

Learning Activity	Participants/Target Group	Resources Used	Delivery System	Date/Timing

2. Learning in Small Groups

- Examples: Bible and theology study groups, social issues study groups, faith sharing groups, lectionary-based groups, service/mission action groups, support groups, special interest groups

What types of small groups does your church offer?

Type of Small Group	Topic/Theme	Participants/Target Group	Resources Used	Date/Timing

3. Learning in Large Groups

- Examples: courses, speaker series, workshops, film festivals, conferences, intergenerational programs

What types of large group learning activities or programs does your church offer?

Learning Activity/Program	Topic/Theme	Participants/Target Group	Resources	Date/Timing

4. Learning in the Congregation

- Examples: Sunday worship, church year events and celebrations, service/mission activities, ministry and leadership in the church and community

How are people helped to learn through their participation in congregational events and ministries?

Church Event or Activity	Date/Timing	Ways People Are Helped to Learn through their Participation

5. Learning in the Community and World

- Examples: programs/courses/clinics/workshops/presentations at universities, retreat centers, YMCAs, libraries, bookstores, regional church programs; through engagement in community/political action, local and global service/justice organizations and projects

How does your church utilize and promote learning opportunities in the community/world? How does your church support people's participation and help them to learning through their participation ?

Learning Activity, Group, or Program	Organization	Ways People Are Helped to Learn through their Participation	Date/Timing

Adult Faith Formation Learning Resources System

Researching Adult Life Issues and Learning Needs

Together as a team research and discuss the important issues and learning needs of your church's adults.

Life Issues

- What's happening in the lives and world of adults in your church today: family, work, leisure, relationships, sexuality, suffering and grief, social and political issues, etc.?

Life Tasks

- What are the developmental life tasks facing adults in the major life periods: 20s-30s, 40s-50s, 60s-70s, 80s-90s?

Milestones and Transitions

- What significant milestones/transitions are adults in your church experiencing, such as geographic relocations, family formation and re-formation, career changes, empty nests, retirement, unanticipated illness, divorce, loss of loved ones, etc.?

Religious Needs

- What are the significant religious learning needs of adults in your church, such as understanding the Bible and relating it to today, understanding the faith tradition and beliefs and how to live them today, making Christian moral decisions, etc.

Spiritual Needs

- What are the significant spiritual needs of adults in your church, such as growing in their relationship with God; living as disciples of Jesus Christ in their daily life at home, in the workplace, in the community and the world; spiritual disciplines and traditions; prayer, etc.?

Ethnic/Cultural Needs

- What are the unique lived experiences, needs, and aspirations of people from each ethnic/cultural community in your church?

Adult Faith Formation Learning Resources System

Adult Faith Formation Interviews

Interview Groups

Organize focus groups of 6-12 people in each of the following age groups of adulthood: 1) 20-30, 2) 40-50, 3) 60-75, and 4) 75+. Be sure to select a diversity of adults who reflect the ethnic and socio-economic character of your church, and the various states in life (single, married, divorced, etc.)

Interview Questions

Use the following questions as the basis of your focus group interviews.

- 1. How would you describe your age group in key words or phrases?**
- 2. What are some of the key life tasks that your age group is experiencing?**
- 3. What are some of the important life issues that your age group is experiencing today?**
- 4. What are the most meaningful experiences you have in life? What makes these experiences meaningful to you?**
- 5. How important is your relationship with God? Why?**
- 6. Where do you experience God most?**
- 7. What are the significant spiritual issues that your age group is experiencing today?**
- 8. What is most important to you about being a Christian (or your particular faith tradition) today?**
- 9. How do you live your Christian faith? Name some of the ways you put your faith into practice.**
- 10. How can the church help you to continue growing as a Christian? Be specific. Name some of the things you would like to see your church offer for adults?**

Adult Faith Formation Learning Resources System

Profile of Adult Life Issues and Learning Needs

Based on your research, discussion, and focus group interviews, develop a profile of the adults in your church.

	20-30 year olds	40-50 year olds	60-75 year olds	75+ year olds
Life Issues				
Life Tasks				
Milestones and Transitions				
Religious Needs				
Spiritual Needs				
Ethnic/ Cultural Needs				
What they want the church to offer				

Adult Faith Formation Learning Resources System

Priority Issues and Learning Needs for Adult Faith Formation

Identify the most important life issues and learning needs from your Profile that your church's adult faith formation should address in the coming year(s).

20-30 year olds	40-50 year olds	60-75 year olds	75+ year olds

Adult Faith Formation Learning Resources System

Researching Learning Resources

Use this format to research and catalog your learning resources.

1. People Resources

- Using your priority issues and learning needs as guide, conduct a gifts/talents/skills/knowledge survey of the people resources in your church, the wider community, the diocese/synod/regional church body, colleges and universities, church-related organizations, etc. who can be invited to take a leadership role in the adult faith formation plan. Consider people who teach courses or specialized programs, guest presenters on specialized topics, leaders for small groups and Bible studies, prayer guides/spiritual directors, leaders for service/mission programs, etc.

Life Issue/Learning Need	Potential Program Leader	Particular Gift/Talent/Skill/Knowledge

2. Face-to-Face Learning Activity Resources

- Identify face-to-face learning activities that you can use to address the priority issues and learning needs. There are a variety of options: 1) programs that your church is already sponsoring, 2) an opportunity that you are not utilizing (e.g., design reflection activities around Sunday worship), 3) a new program that your church can adopt, and 4) a program that you can promote as part of your plan and encourage adult participation. Consider programs in your church, the wider community, the diocese/synod/regional church body, retreat and conference centers, colleges and universities, church-related organizations, etc.
- Indicate the **learning model(s)** used in the program: Learning on Your Own, Learning in Small Group, Learning in Large Group, Learning in the Congregation, and/or Learning in the Community and World.

Life Issue/Learning Need	Learning Program & Sponsor	Learning Models	Location	Date/Timing	Cost

3. Print and Media Learning Activity Resources

- Identify print and media resources from publishers and learning organizations that you can use to address the priority issues and learning needs. Review the **Adult Faith Formation Resource Guides** for assistance.
- Indicate the **learning model(s)** used in the resource: Learning on Your Own, Learning in Small Group, Learning in Large Group, Learning in the Congregation, and/or Learning in the Community and World.

Life Issue/Learning Need	Resource	Producer	Learning Models	Cost

4. Online Learning Activity Resources

- Identify online learning activity resources that you can use to address the priority issues and learning needs. Review the **Adult Faith Formation Resource Guides** for assistance.
- Indicate the **learning model(s)** used in the resource: Learning on Your Own, Learning in Small Group, Learning in Large Group, Learning in the Congregation, and/or Learning in the Community and World.

Life Issue/Learning Need	Website	Learning Activity	Website Address	Cost

Adult Faith Formation Learning Resources System

Integrated Adult Faith Formation Learning Activity Plans

Create Adult Faith Formation Learning Activity Plans to address each of the important life issues and learning needs. Decide which learning activities you will incorporate in your plan. You will also need to determine if there are priority needs for which there are no program resources. The team will need to design new programs to address these needs.

A Learning Activity Plan addresses a life issue or learning need with learning opportunities and resources using the five learning models:

1. learning on your own
2. learning in small groups
3. learning in large groups
4. learning in the congregation
5. learning in the community/world

A Learning Activity Plan incorporates a variety of ways to learn in face-to-face, physical places and in virtual, online spaces.

- **Physical:** church, homes, coffee shop, colleges, service/mission sites, retreat centers, monasteries, theaters, community sites, etc.
- **Online:** audio and video podcasts, print resources, online courses, website links for further learning, online community and social networking, topic-specific blogs, etc.

Each Adult Faith Formation Learning Activity Plan seeks to incorporate a variety of ways to learn: differing levels of depth and commitment, a variety of learning models reflecting the diversity of learning styles, online and face-to-face learning, and times and locations that are convenient for adults. This approach means that adults can have a variety of ways to learn a topic, removing many of the more common obstacles to adult learning in churches.

Example

Spiritual Formation Learning Activity Plan **Focus: Learning Spiritual Disciplines and Practices**

On Your Own

- Daily Prayer: www.sacredspace.ie, www.taize.fr, www.upperroom.org, www.loyolapress.com
- Fixed Hour Prayer: www.explorefaith.org/prayer/fixed/hours.php
- Spiritual Guides: a list of individuals available for 1-1 spiritual mentoring
- Spiritual Reading: a list of recommended books on the church website
- Online Retreat: *A 34 week retreat for Everyday Life* from Creighton University, <http://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/cmo-retreat.html>
- Weekly and Seasonal Prayer Resources: online and in booklets
- Online Spirituality Course: 40-day retreats with spiritual guides like Thomas Merton, Joyce Rupp, Henri Nouwen, and Joan Chittister from Spirituality and Practice, www.SpiritualityandPractice.com

In Small Groups

- Spiritual Formation Course: *Companions in Christ: A Small-Group Experience in Spiritual Formation*, Upper Room Books, www.companionsinchrist.org

In Large Groups

- Intergenerational Learning Programs on Prayer: monthly sessions for all ages on prayer practices
- Retreat Experience: at church or a retreat center
- Workshop Series on the Spiritual Disciplines: Lectio Divina, silence, contemplation, the Examen, meditation, spiritual reading, fixed hour prayer
- Monastery Trip: experiencing monastic life

In the Congregation

- Prayer Room: with resources about prayer and spiritual practices
- Advent and Lent Prayer Services

Learning Activities for Adult Faith Formation

Learning on Your Own

- ✓ Reading
- ✓ Bible Reading
- ✓ Devotions
- ✓ Prayer and Spiritual Practices/Disciplines
- ✓ Online Theology and Bible Courses
- ✓ Online Spirituality Courses
- ✓ Online Spiritual Formation
- ✓ Online Retreats
- ✓ Spiritual Direction
- ✓ Milestones/Life Transitions Resources and Support
- ✓ Mentoring and Apprenticeship
- ✓ Audio Podcasts
- ✓ Video Podcasts
- ✓ Feature Films
- ✓ Television Programs

Learning in Small Groups

- ✓ Book Clubs
- ✓ Bible Study Groups
- ✓ Lectionary-Based Small Groups
- ✓ Prayer Groups
- ✓ Theology Study Groups
- ✓ Social Issues Study-Action Groups (e.g., *JustFaith*, *JustSkills*, *JustMatters*, and *Engaging Spirituality*: www.justfaith.org)
- ✓ Discipleship and Faith Sharing Groups
- ✓ Christian Practices Small Groups
- ✓ *Living Your Strengths* Small Group Program (book, DVD, and leader's kit)
- ✓ Service/Mission Action Groups
- ✓ Kindred Groups (mom's groups, men and women groups, parents groups)
- ✓ Recovery Groups (divorce, addiction, depression)
- ✓ Special Interest Groups
- ✓ Movie Discussion Group
- ✓ Career Transitions Group (exploring a new career or seeking a new career direction)
- ✓ Life Transitions Groups (family changes, retirement, loss of loved ones)

Learning in Large Groups

- ✓ Theological Topics Courses
- ✓ Bible Courses
- ✓ Introduction to Christian Faith Courses (e.g., Alpha course: www.alphausa.org)

- ✓ Life Issues Courses
- ✓ Parenting Classes and Workshops
- ✓ Intergenerational Programs
- ✓ Speaker Series
- ✓ Single-Session Programs
- ✓ Workshops
- ✓ Round Table Discussions
- ✓ Field Trips (museums, monastery, theater, concert)
- ✓ Faith and Film Festivals
- ✓ Retreats
- ✓ Conferences
- ✓ Faith and Music Concert
- ✓ Financial Planning Course (e.g., Financial Peace University by Dave Ramsey: www.daveramsey.com and Crown Financial Study: www.crown.org)
- ✓ Milestones Faith Formation: 1) preparation for a milestone, 2) church celebration, and 3) continued learning, resources, and support

Learning in the Congregation

- ✓ Sunday worship (lectionary and sermon study)
- ✓ Church year seasons and events (Advent, Lent, Holy Week, etc.)
- ✓ Service/Mission Projects
- ✓ Ministry and Leadership
- ✓ Milestone and Life Transition Celebrations

Learning in the Community and World

- ✓ College/University/Seminary Programs (programs, courses, clinics, workshops, lecture series)
- ✓ Retreat Center Programs
- ✓ Monastery Programs/Experiences
- ✓ YMCA/YWCA
- ✓ Library Programs
- ✓ Bookstore Programs and Reading Groups
- ✓ Regional Church Programs
- ✓ Community Social/Political Action
- ✓ Local and Global Service and Action for Justice (organizations and projects)
- ✓ Community Lunch and Learn (community leaders speaking about key issues in the community)

Adult Faith Formation Learning Resources System

Adult Faith Formation Learning Activity Plan Worksheet

Use this worksheet for each life issue or learning need that you will include in your Adult Faith Formation Plan.

Life Issue or Learning Need: _____

Target Participants: _____

Learning Activities

Learning Model List each activity.	Learning Resources List resources to be used.	Leaders List leaders involved.	Date Timing
Learning on Your Own			
Learning in Small Groups			
Learning in Large Groups			
Learning in the Congregation			
Learning in the Community and World			

Adult Faith Formation Learning Resources System

Digital Media and Online Strategies for Adult Faith Formation

An Adult Faith Formation Learning Resources System needs to take advantage of the abilities and resources that the new media afford: websites, online learning, email/texting/Twitter, social networking, and digital technologies (an iPod Touch, smart cell phones like the iPhone). This means that churches can deliver faith formation experiences and resources anytime and anywhere, reaching people wherever they go online (home, work, school, vacation, coffee house). Utilizing the new media will revolutionize adult faith formation in a church. Think of the possibilities for using the new media:

- A virtual faith formation center sharing not only audio and video clips of some of the sermons and other worship experiences but also extending it through the daily posting of images, songs, meditations, inspirational stories, prayers of the people, and online worship exercises.
- A calendar of events with locations, times, and descriptions, with Web-streamed audio and video recordings of select offerings.
- Themed “gathering spaces” for synchronous and asynchronous interaction, including live text-based chat and live audio/video conferences, threaded discussions, collected blog links, self-paced tutorials on a range of topics, etc.
- A library pod with access to e-journals, e-books, archived streaming video of speakers and events, a clearinghouse-type collection of links to resources, and other Internet-mediated resources.
- A mission/service opportunity clearinghouse for local, national, and international internships, volunteer opportunities, and jobs.
- A learning center with courses and webinars on topics such as faith themes, Bible studies, life issues, and Christian practices, self-paced and facilitated by church staff and church members at scheduled times.
- Small group gatherings online for faith sharing, Bible study, and book discussions
- A resource center with daily, weekly and seasonal faith formation resources

The good news is that your church doesn't have to create all of this content or web programming. You can use your church's website (perhaps with some redesign), and existing technologies and resources to take advantage of all the new digital media. Do a little research on the ways churches are using their websites as platforms for extending and expanding people's experience of church and faith formation. Here are several churches to begin your research:

- Christ Presbyterian Church (Minnesota): www.cpconline.org
- Ginghamburg Church (Ohio): <http://ginghamsburg.org/>
- New Hope Church, Hawaii www.enewhope.org/
- New Song Church (Southern California): www.newsong.net/
- Northcoast Church (San Diego): www.northcoastchurch.com
- Redeemer Presbyterian Church (New York City): www.redeemer.com

1. Connecting to Podcasts and Courses at iTunes University

iTunes U, part of the iTunes Store, is possibly the world's greatest collection of free educational media available to students, teachers, and lifelong learners. With over 200,000 educational audio and video files available, iTunes U has quickly become the engine for the mobile learning movement. With a computer or iPhone (or other video-enhanced phone) or iPod Touch, iTunes U is directly accessible over both cellular and Wi-Fi networks through the iTunes Store. Audio and video podcasts let university students and adult learners study at their own pace, wherever and whenever they want.

A course or podcast (audio or video) from iTunes U can be used as the content for Learning on Your Own or for Learning in a Small Group or as the content presentation for Learning in a Large Group (using a computer and projector). Using the iTunes search engine you can identify your topic and search through hundreds of faith-related podcasts (audio

and video) and courses. Download the iTunes software at: www.apple.com/itunes.

A Catholic parish could utilize a podcast series, *Catholic Comments*, produced by professors J.J. O’Keefe and W.M. Wright of Creighton University on topics relating Catholic theology and life. These podcasts could be connected to religious learning needs in the Learning Resources System and linked to iTunes U. A second example is a complete 26-session course, *Introduction to New Testament History and Literature*, by professor Dale Martin of Yale University covering each of the books of the New Testament.

2. Connecting to Online Courses

Many universities and seminaries offer continuing education courses in theology, scripture, and the Christian life for adults. These courses can be incorporated into an adult faith formation plan as Learning on Your Own experience by connecting adults to the course’s website. Courses can also be used as a Learning in a Small Group experience using a presentation with a computer and large screen monitor or projector and screen.

Here are three examples of online courses that can be a part of a church’s adult faith formation plan. Be sure to research online continuing education courses for adults at your denomination’s seminaries and universities.

- C21 Online at Boston College (www.bc.edu/sites/c21online). C21 Online, or Church in the 21st Century Online, offers non-credit online courses for adult spiritual enrichment and faith formation. With a focus on shared reflection in an online learning community, C21 Online models the kind of conversation and participation that lead to deeper understanding of and personal growth in faith.
- STEP Online Theology at University of Notre Dame (<http://step.nd.edu>). STEP offers online courses designed and developed by a professor from Notre Dame’s Department of Theology and then delivered by a STEP facilitator.
- The Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation (VLCFF) at University of Dayton (<http://vlc.udayton.edu>). VLCFF offers dozens of online courses in theology, scripture, and Christian life in seven cycles through the year.

3. Connecting to Website Content-Providers

Many websites provide content-rich faith formation resources that you can utilize as part of your Adult Faith Formation Plan. Select the websites and resources that you want, include the information in your adult faith formation program guide, and provide links to these websites from your church’s website.

Here are a few of the excellent content-rich websites that you can utilize:

- www.bustedhalo.com (young adult)
- www.thethoughtfulchristian.com (bible studies related to today’s world)
- www.spiritualityandpractice.com (spiritual practices and spiritual life courses)
- www.loyolapress.com (faith formation and spirituality resources)
- www.practicingourfaith.org (Christian practices resources and study guides)
- <http://leaderresources.org> (Christian formation resources for adults and all ages)

4. Creating a Social Network

Creating online communities and social networks should become an important component of an Adult Faith Formation Plan and it has never been easier when a church uses an established social networking site, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and Ning. The top reason for beginning a social network is to connect with church members, but churches now use their social network to communicate important upcoming events and volunteer opportunities to members of the congregation. Here are two examples.

Christians @Work

(The United Methodist Church of the Resurrection, Leawood, KS and LinkedIn, www.linkedin.com)

We are Business Leaders living Christian principles and values that transform the workplace. The mission of the Christians @ Work ministry is to help business leaders become deeply committed Christians and to apply those values in the workplace. The ministry is dedicated to

establishing a fellowship among Resurrection and community Christian business leaders by:

- *providing opportunities to join small groups of business leaders that encourage one another and explore how to best integrate their faith into the workplace,*
- *offering periodic network events at Resurrection and elsewhere in partnership with regional and national Christian workplace organizations.*

How Do I Get Connected?

- *Join our Christians@Work online network at LinkedIn. By joining this network, you will receive communications about upcoming events and opportunities.*
- *Sign up to join or start a new group. A list of groups are located at the right side of this page. Pick a group that works best for you and email the leader. We will help you get started, identify others in your area, and pick studies for group meetings.*

Book of Faith Initiative

<http://bookoffaith.ning.com>

(The Book of Faith Initiative of the ELCA and Ning, www.ning.com)

The purpose of the Book of Faith Initiative is to increase biblical literacy and fluency for the sake of the world. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has made a commitment to encourage all members of our congregations, from children to adults, to dig deeper into our book of faith, the Bible. The Book of Faith Initiative recommends a new model for our church—a grass-roots approach embracing a common vision in which all are invited to open scripture and join the conversation. Each community is encouraged to decide.

The Ning Bible of Faith Network includes 1) stories of churches implementing the Book of Faith Initiative, 2) a blog, 3) conversations, 4) interest groups, 5) videos and photos, 6) event listings, and 6) resources.

5. Creating a Podcast

(From “Podcasting Faith: Media for Ministry” by Mike Hayes, *Lifelong Faith* Volume 2.4, Winter 2008)

The steps to podcasting are simple enough. First, you need a way to record audio in digital format. This can be done several ways. You can buy an audio recorder from a high end audio/video store. You can spend a lot of money and build a studio in your church basement and soundproof the room. Or you can simply plug a microphone into your computer or run a cable from your church’s sound system into your audio recording device as well. I do all three. I bought a rather inexpensive mp3 recorder from Radio Shack that had good enough quality. I downloaded an audio editor from the internet for free (audacity.com) and my boss and I built a studio in his religious community’s basement in a room that ironically was once a radio station. When I’m on the road, I use my audio recorder often—to interview people I meet, to record meditation services or reflections that I preach at services or even to simply describe a scene in a unique venue (like World Youth Day with the Pope or the World Series in Philadelphia). We sit down weekly in our studio and simply answer a question of faith that is on the minds of young adults and my priest friends record their homilies right off of their audio system.

Further innovations include the BustedHalo® Pod Retreat where we take the reflection witness talks that young people give and expose them to a wider audience. We provide additional technical support by forming a discussion group online and even connecting them with a spiritual director that they can chat with over the internet for some further direction.

People find these podcasts on what is called a Podcast aggregator—a website of sorts that lists podcasts and creates a link not merely for you to download the podcasts but also for you to subscribe to it. iTunes is the most popular aggregator on the internet and that is where people can find your podcasts after you list it in their directory.

Sounds confusing? It’s not. What’s more is that there are two places that will lead you step by step through the process. One is a book called *Podcast Solutions* by Michael Geoghegan and Dan Klass (Berkeley: Friends of Ed, 2007). This book is what I used when we started our podcast at BustedHalo® Ministries. The second source is BustedHalo.com® our website where Fr. Dave Dwyer has listed the steps for how to podcast at the bottom of our homepage.

6. Creating a Blog

Blogs are an excellent way to share information about your church, adult faith formation, the Bible, theology, etc. with the adults in your church and to engage them in sharing their thoughts, ideas, practices, etc. Churches can develop a variety of blogs to engage people in continuing learning around specific learning activities, programs, and events.

Generally speaking (although there are exceptions), blogs tend to have a few things in common: 1) a main content area with articles listed chronologically, newest on top, and often organized into categories; 2) an archive of older articles; 3) a way for people to leave comments about the articles; and 4) a list of links to other related sites, sometimes called a “blogroll”; and 5) one or more “feeds” like RSS, Atom or RDF files.

Content is the *raison d’être* for any web site. Retail sites feature a catalog of products. University sites contain information about their campuses, curriculum, and faculty. News sites show the latest news stories. For a personal blog, you might have a bunch of observations, or reviews. Without some sort of updated content, there is little reason to visit a web site more than once.

On a blog, the content consists of articles (also sometimes called “posts” or “entries”) that the author(s) writes. Yes, some blogs have multiple authors, each writing his or her own articles. Typically, blog authors compose their articles in a web-based interface, built into the blogging system itself. Some blogging systems also support the ability to use stand-alone “weblog client” software, which allows authors to write articles offline and upload them at a later time.

Want an interactive website? Wouldn’t it be nice if the readers of a website could leave comments, tips or impressions about the site or a specific article? With blogs, they can! Posting comments is one of the most exciting features of blogs. Most blogs have a method to allow visitors to leave comments. There are also nifty ways for authors of other blogs to leave comments without even visiting the blog! Called “pingbacks” or “trackbacks,” they can inform other bloggers whenever they cite an article from another site in their own articles. All this ensures that online conversations can be maintained painlessly among various site users and websites.

Two of the more popular, free, and easy-to-use blogging sites and services are Blogger and WordPress. They both provide you with the tools and

templates for developing a blog, and you can host your blog on their sites if you want. Check out the tools and services: Blogger: www.blogger.com; WordPress: <http://wordpress.org>.

The 5 Immutable Laws of Persuasive Blogging Brian Clark (www.copyblogger.com)

Blogging is a great way to grow a business, promote a cause, or spread new ideas, because when you take an educational approach to marketing, you gain the attention and trust of people who might otherwise simply ignore old-fashioned advertising. Not only can those people become your customers or converts, they can also become your advocates. While there are as many ways to approach blogging as there are blogs, some things remain steadfast when it comes to gaining influence and prompting action. Here are the 5 bedrock elements to keep in mind when you blog to persuade:

1. ***The Law of Value:*** Your blog must provide value to the reader by addressing a problem, concern, desire, or need that the reader already has. Fresh, original content is critical.
2. ***The Law of Headlines and Hooks:*** Your post titles must stand out in a crowded, noisy blogosphere, and you must quickly communicate the value of reading further with your opening.
3. ***The Law of “How To”:*** People don’t want to know “what” you can do, they want to know “how” it’s done. If you think you’re giving away too much information, you’re on the right track.
4. ***The Law of the List:*** Love them or hate them, informational posts presented in list format are easily digestible, and allow for an efficient transfer of your value proposition to the reader.
5. ***The Law of the Story:*** Stories are the most persuasive blogging element of all, as they allow you to present a problem, the solution, and the results, all while the connotation of the story allows readers to sell themselves on what you have to offer.

Digital Media and Online Resources



Podcast Solutions: The Complete Guide to Audio and Video Podcasting
Michael Geoghegan and Dan Klas (Berkeley: friends of Ed, 2007) [\$24.99]

Podcast Solutions is a comprehensive and perceptive guide to all things podcasting, covering the entire world of podcasting whether you want to use podcasting to inform, educate, entertain, or inspire, whether you are a complete novice or an experienced professional. In this book you'll learn 1) how to find and download audio and video podcasts to your computer or portable media player, 2) how to develop, format, produce, edit, encode, and upload your audio or video podcast, 3) how to set up an effective audio studio, and 4) how to create great video.



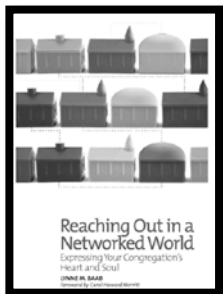
Web-Empower Your Church: Unleashing the Power of Internet Ministry
Mark M. Stephenson. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2006. \$23.50)

Web-Empower Your Church offers step-by-step guidance to web implementers and other church leaders who are on the exciting journey to building an effective web ministry. The book offers first-hand advice on every aspect of building an internet ministry: from assembling a team to designing and maintaining the website to adding powerful ministry features. The accompanying CD-ROM contains documentation, training, and a demonstration version of website software.



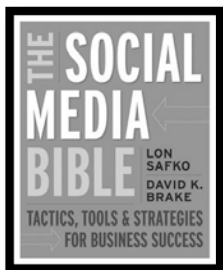
The Blogging Church: Sharing the Story of Your Church through Blogs
Brian Bailey with Terry Storch (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2007) [\$19.95]

The Blogging Church offers church leaders a field manual for using the social phenomenon of blogs to connect people and build communities in a whole new way. Inside you will find the why, what, and how of blogging in the local church. Filled with illustrative examples and practical advice, the authors answer key questions learned on the frontlines of ministry: How does it benefit ministry? How do I build a great blog? and Who am I blogging for? *The Blogging Church* is a handbook that will inspire and equip you to join the conversation.



Reaching Out in A Networked World
Lynne Baab. (Herndon, VA: Alban Institute, 2008) [\$18]

In *Reaching Out in a Networked World*, communications expert and pastor Lynne Baab examines technologies such as websites, blogs, online communities, and desktop publishing. She demonstrates how a congregation can evaluate these tools and appropriately use them to communicate its heart and soul, to convey its identity and values both within and outside the congregation. Baab urges congregation leaders to reflect on the way they communicate. The recent explosion in communication technologies offers many new ways to present values and identity.



The Social Media Bible: Tactics, Tools & Strategies
Lon Safko and David K. Brake (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley Publishers, 2009) [\$29.95]

The Social Media Bible will show you how to build or transform your organization into a social media-enabled enterprise where people can connect and collaborate. You'll learn how to engage people in new forms of communication, collaboration, education, and entertainment; determine which social media tactics you should be using; evaluate and categorize the tools and applications that constitute the rapidly evolving social media ecosystem, make social media tools like Facebook, MySpace, YouTube, Twitter, blogging, podcasting, and hundreds of others a part of your strategy.

Adult Faith Formation Learning Resources System

Spiritual Assessment Tool

The United Methodist Church of the Resurrection, Leawood, KS
 (www.cor.org/programs-ministries/thejourney)

We invite you to join us on the greatest journey of your life – The Journey of Knowing, Loving and Serving God – as we strive to become a community of deeply committed Christians. We know that sometimes getting started can be daunting, especially in such a large church, but we want to travel this journey with you. Our Adult Discipleship Ministry offers you a navigation system that provides directions, routes and traveling companions to support and encourage you along the way. We believe that nothing in the world will bring you greater joy, greater challenge and greater meaning than the journey into life as God intended us to live it. To help encourage and equip you for your Journey, we've created the Journey assessment tool.

spiritual assessment

Knowing God

1. I understand the essential beliefs of the Christian faith, and the context that leads to essential tenets in our religious tradition.

2. I have a good knowledge of the Bible, including its major events and themes, and I know how to read the Bible for personal understanding.

3. I know how to read the Bible, "the old testament/new testament" (see appendix in our adult faith formation text).

4. I understand the Christian faith and how it has been passed on to me through the centuries, and how it has been lived out in the world.

5. I have a good understanding of God's will for human beings, and I know how to discern the will of the Holy Spirit.

Loving God

1. I know and feel the power of God's love and respond to it with love that is true and real.

2. I love God by my faith and sense of awe and wonder, and I desire to love with my life.

3. I love my neighbor as myself, and I love my neighbor as I love myself.

4. I love my neighbor as myself, and I love my neighbor as I love myself, and I love my neighbor as I love myself, and I love my neighbor as I love myself.

5. I love my neighbor as myself, and I love my neighbor as I love myself, and I love my neighbor as I love myself, and I love my neighbor as I love myself.

Serving God

1. I have a vision of serving God and others.

2. I have a vision of serving God and others, and I have a vision of serving God and others.

3. I have a vision of serving God and others, and I have a vision of serving God and others.

4. I have a vision of serving God and others, and I have a vision of serving God and others.

5. I have a vision of serving God and others, and I have a vision of serving God and others.

Place your self-assessment number for each question below and add across, giving you an overall total.

Knowing:	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Loving:	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Serving:	1	2	3	4	5	Total

Use the chart on the right to help you interpret your results. Each score represents your level of understanding of God. Use the following scale as a general guide for the results:

0-2 Level 1 3-4 Level 2 5 Level 3

Knowing God

We cannot fully understand God (or the world, we wouldn't have much of a God). But the mysteries and questions are not obstacles to growth – they are an invitation to continually journey deeper in our understanding of God and the Kingdom to which he calls us. As we increase our understanding of the God we worship and serve, which is central to the word "faithful," we increase our capacity to love the God who designed us to love. Our hearts and minds are continually renewed with the Kingdom's grace, and our lives are transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Loving God

What we think and what we do are expressions of who we are. If you find it hard to love yourself as a loving presence – that is, when we're thinking with God and being God in our lives, we find that transformation becomes a beautiful reality. When you see a chance to be a loving presence, you are invited to love with the living presence. It means that participation will draw you into a deeper level of love for God and neighbor.

Serving God

The Christian life is about more than correct thoughts and loving attitudes. It's about living our faith in the real and right in the world. The more doing the work of the Kingdom. Celebrate those and whatever opportunities marked with the serving disciplines will help you get your hands dirty for the Kingdom. These include mission opportunities, volunteering and much more.

THE JOURNEY
PERSONAL SPIRITUAL ASSESSMENT

Take the next step today.

Visit www.cor.org/faithstudies or the Resurrection Hall in Leawood to view a detailed listing of classes and service opportunities and to register.

The Journey: Knowing, Loving and Serving God

At Church of the Resurrection, our purpose is to build a Christian community where men and women of all ages are becoming deeply committed Christians. Our vision is to help you identify where you are in your spiritual journey so that you can make better choices to guide your growth.

Use these 15 questions to assess where you are at, honestly and bravely. Add up your total and check one of the suggested next steps.

The United Methodist Church of the Resurrection

Spiritual Growth Opportunities

This chart offers recommendations for spiritual growth. Adults are also encouraged to go online to: www.cor.org/next_steps or the Connection Point in the Narthex of Resurrection Church to view detailed listing of classes and service opportunities and to register.

Knowing God: Becoming Theologically Informed

1 I have a growing understanding of the essential beliefs of the Christian faith, and feel confident that I could share my understanding of them with a non-religious friend.

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| Level 1 | Read the Apostles Creed as a model of the essential beliefs of the Christian faith. After a quiet reflection period, write a personal statement of your understanding of the Christian faith. Share this statement with a friend. |
| Level 2 | Read the Catechism and the Nicene Creed. Write a personal statement of your understanding of the Christian faith. Share this statement with a friend. |
| Level 3 | Write a personal statement of your understanding of the Christian faith. Share this statement with a friend. |

2 I have a growing knowledge of the Bible, including its major events and themes, and I know how to read it daily for maximum understanding.

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| Level 1 | Commit to reading your Bible each day, using the GRS (Good News Bible) Study Bible. Use the study guide to guide your reading. |
| Level 2 | Purchase a good study Bible, such as the NIV Study Bible or the New Interpreter's Study Bible. Learn how to use the study guide to guide your reading. |
| Level 3 | Share with your small group about how to read your Bible. Use the study guide to guide your reading. |

3 If someone were to ask me, "What do United Methodists believe?" I feel increasingly confident in my ability to give an informed answer.

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| Level 1 | Learn and understand the major events and themes of the Christian faith. Read the Catechism and the Nicene Creed. |
| Level 2 | Read the Catechism and the Nicene Creed. Write a personal statement of your understanding of the Christian faith. |
| Level 3 | Share with your small group about how to read your Bible. Use the study guide to guide your reading. |

4 I have a growing understanding of basic Christian ethics, and I am continually developing a deeper ability to draw upon my faith to come to conclusions about important moral and ethical issues.

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| Level 1 | Each day you have ethical decisions. Before you act, ask yourself and pray about the "rightness" of your action. Write a personal statement of your understanding of the Christian faith. |
| Level 2 | Read the Catechism and the Nicene Creed. Write a personal statement of your understanding of the Christian faith. |
| Level 3 | Share with your small group about how to read your Bible. Use the study guide to guide your reading. |

5 I have a growing understanding of God's will for human beings, and I know how to discern His will for my life in particular.

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| Level 1 | Choose one decision, life or death, that you are currently making. Write a personal statement of your understanding of the Christian faith. |
| Level 2 | Read the Catechism and the Nicene Creed. Write a personal statement of your understanding of the Christian faith. |
| Level 3 | Share with your small group about how to read your Bible. Use the study guide to guide your reading. |

Loving God: Becoming Spiritually Transformed

1 I know God has the power to transform lives and I'm open and responsive to whatever that may lead in my life.

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| Level 1 | Read the Catechism and the Nicene Creed. Write a personal statement of your understanding of the Christian faith. |
| Level 2 | Read the Catechism and the Nicene Creed. Write a personal statement of your understanding of the Christian faith. |
| Level 3 | Share with your small group about how to read your Bible. Use the study guide to guide your reading. |

2 I have a growing ability to lay aside my own desires and sense of importance and submit to God's will for my life.

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| Level 1 | Examine your life and identify areas where you are not submitting to God's will. |
| Level 2 | Fast from TV or another time-consuming activity for one week. Reflect on how the habits affect your life. |
| Level 3 | Each day pray the Weekly Confession. After praying the prayer, take one step toward laying aside your own desires. |

3 As a means of growing in Christ, I regularly practice various spiritual disciplines (e.g. worship, prayer, Bible study) in my life.

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| Level 1 | Pray, read your Bible, and worship regularly. |
| Level 2 | Discover what spiritual disciplines are and how to practice them. |
| Level 3 | Share with your small group about how to read your Bible. Use the study guide to guide your reading. |

4 I have a deepening experience of "the fruit of the Spirit" (Galatians 5:22) in my life - of "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control."

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| Level 1 | Meditate on Galatians 5:22. Write a personal statement of your understanding of the Christian faith. |
| Level 2 | Ask yourself, "What would my life be like if I were filled with the fruit of the Spirit?" |
| Level 3 | Share with your small group about how to read your Bible. Use the study guide to guide your reading. |

5 I have a group of friends with whom I meet regularly in order to grow in faith together and to challenge each other to grow deeper in Christ.

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| Level 1 | Pray, read your Bible, and worship regularly. |
| Level 2 | Discover what spiritual disciplines are and how to practice them. |
| Level 3 | Share with your small group about how to read your Bible. Use the study guide to guide your reading. |

Serving God: Serving God daily in the World

1 I actively serve in God's world by helping meet critical needs through acts of justice and mercy, showing in actions what it means to follow Jesus Christ.

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| Level 1 | Volunteer in one of the church's outreach ministries. |
| Level 2 | Conduct a "give volunteer" service project outside the walls of the church. |
| Level 3 | As God leads you, serve others and pursue justice in the world. |

2 I am actively nurturing the spiritual lives of others by sharing my faith story, offering spiritual encouragement and leading others to Christ.

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| Level 1 | Invite a friend to church or a neighbor to church. |
| Level 2 | Keep a journal of your spiritual journey. |
| Level 3 | Practice sharing your faith story with others. |

3 I have discovered my God-given spiritual gifts, and regularly take steps to develop those gifts and to actively serve Christ by using them.

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| Level 1 | Identify what things you do well at and what things you struggle with. |
| Level 2 | Learn what your God-given spiritual gifts are and how to use them. |
| Level 3 | Focus on how God intends your gifts to be used in the world. |

4 I give back to Christ by giving to the church and to others in proportion to my income, with at least 10% as my goal.

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| Level 1 | Begin planning your financial giving as a portion of your income. |
| Level 2 | Increase your giving by one or two percent of your income. |
| Level 3 | Make tithing the goal for your giving, and give more than 10% of your income. |

5 I invest time in building my relationships with God and with others, and I increasingly manage my time according to God's priorities.

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| Level 1 | Set aside at least two hours a month specifically for serving God and others. |
| Level 2 | Identify the top priorities in your life and eliminate them in order to have more time to give to God and others. |
| Level 3 | Review your time calendar and eliminate anything that is not a priority. |

Adult Faith Formation Learning Resources System

Marketing Suggestions

Creating Your Message

Here are five things to remember as you develop your marketing plan. You may need to develop several “messages” for each target audience (20s-30s, 40-50s, 60s-70s, and 75+). Be sure to pay careful attention to the titles of your programs so that they capture people’s interests. Develop descriptions that are positive in tone, indicate clearly the content or focus of the program, and include the particulars (date, location, cost, and time).

1. **Find the inherent drama within your offering:** What’s interesting in your program offerings? How does it respond to something within the lives of people? Connect the program offerings to the real needs of adults.
2. **Translate that inherent drama into a meaningful benefit:** What are the major benefits in participating in adult faith formation? Why should people respond? The benefit should come directly from the inherently dramatic feature. And even though you have four or five benefits, stick with one or two—three at most.
3. **Get people’s attention:** How will you interest people in adult faith formation? People do not pay attention to advertising. They pay attention only to things that interest them. So you’ve just got to interest them.
4. **Motivate your audience to do something:** What do you want people to do once you’ve introduced the adult faith formation offerings? You must tell people exactly what you want them to do. Tell them to go online a register for a program, complete an interest finder, send in a registration form, call someone, etc.
5. **Be sure you are communicating clearly:** Do adults understand what you’re talking about? Make sure you are putting your message across. Show your promotion or booklet or advertising to ten people and ask them what the main point is. If one person misunderstands, that means 10 percent of the audience will misunderstand. Make revisions so your message is clear.

- United Methodist Communications has a great online resource for developing a marketing plan. Go to www.umcom.org/site/c.mrLZJ9PFKmG/b.5160951/k.54F3/Church_Marketing_Plan.htm.

Developing Your Marketing Strategies

1. Create a seasonal or annual adult faith formation program booklet in various formats: print, online in PDF, online calendar, etc.
2. Use your church’s website to post regular announcements, new program offerings, calendar, etc.
3. Establish a Facebook site for your church’s adult faith formation and include a calendar of events with descriptions, locations, times, a link to your church’s website, current news, stories from adults who are participating in learning activities, etc.
4. Send email invitations to adults in the church community. Target your message to particular groups or ages.
5. Send personalized and targeted invitations by mail to people with a letter, program booklet, registration form, etc.
6. Have the pastor share the importance and benefits of adult faith formation and the church’s program offerings at Sunday worship.
7. Use orientation or information sessions to describe the benefits of adult faith formation and introduce each new season of adult faith formation programming (e.g., coffee and donuts after Sunday worship).
8. Promote program offerings in the community: coffee shops, YMCA/YWCA, gyms, bookstores, theaters, etc.
9. Include information about adult faith formation offerings in new member packets. Send a personalized invitation to new members with the program booklet.
10. Send a personalized invitation and program booklet to newly married couples, parents who are having their children baptized, adults who have been fully initiated into the church (RCIA), et al.
11. Develop a introductory brochure on adult faith formation, the types of programs offered, and how to get more information and register for programs on the church’s website.

Adult Faith Formation Learning Resources System

Sample Questions for Evaluating an Adult Learning Activity

Here are a variety of evaluation questions that you can use to construct your own evaluation forms. Be sure to adapt the questions depending the model of learning used and if the learning is in a physical place or online space.

1. What is your overall feeling after participating in this program/learning activity? (Circle all that apply.)
Enthused Astounded Satisfied Indifferent Ambivalent Encouraged Uneasy Threatened
Discouraged Affirmed Challenged Enriched
2. This program/learning activity was... very helpful somewhat helpful not very helpful not at all helpful
3. I was pleased by/with... I was disappointed by/with...
4. One thing I found most helpful during this program/learning activity...
5. One of the biggest benefits from participating in the program/learning activity...
6. One way I can use what I learned in my life...
7. I need to know more about...
8. I'm excited by... I'm challenged by...
9. What knowledge or practices have you learned that you did not know before the program/learning activity?
10. How do you feel about the amount of presentation/activities/discussion in this program/learning activity?
 Too much presentation Too much discussion Too many activities Good mixture
11. Circle the number that best represents your evaluation of the program/learning activity.
(1=strongly disagree, 4 = strongly agree)
 - I feel that I will be able to use what I learned. 1 2 3 4
 - The program was presented in an interesting manner. 1 2 3 4
 - The program covered the promised objectives. 1 2 3 4
 - The presenter encouraged participation, questions, and practical application. 1 2 3 4
 - The schedule and length of the program was appropriate. 1 2 3 4
 - The program utilized my experience effectively as a resource for learning. 1 2 3 4
 - The program environment was characterized by physical comfort, mutual trust and respect, mutual helpfulness, freedom of expression, and acceptance of differences. 1 2 3 4
 - The program respected my learning style. 1 2 3 4
 - The program offered a variety of learning activities and a variety of ways to learn. 1 2 3 4
 - The program helped me apply my learning to daily life, so that I could see the results and rewards of the learning experience. 1 2 3 4
12. Please rate the environment or physical facilities...
 Fine Good Okay Poor
13. Please rate the scheduling (time, day, month) of the program/learning activity...
 Fine Good Okay Poor
14. How did you find out about the program/learning activity?
15. Why did you decide to participate in this program/learning activity?
16. What are two or three suggestion for improving this program/learning activity...

Create a Learning Journal for an Adult Learning Activity

Create a learning journal for a program/learning activity that includes the following information:

To reflect on what you have learned, identify the insights you have gained and the potential application to your life.

- *Insights (What I've Learned)*
- *Applications (How I'll Use What I've Learned)*
- *Questions (What I Need to Learn or Explore Further)*