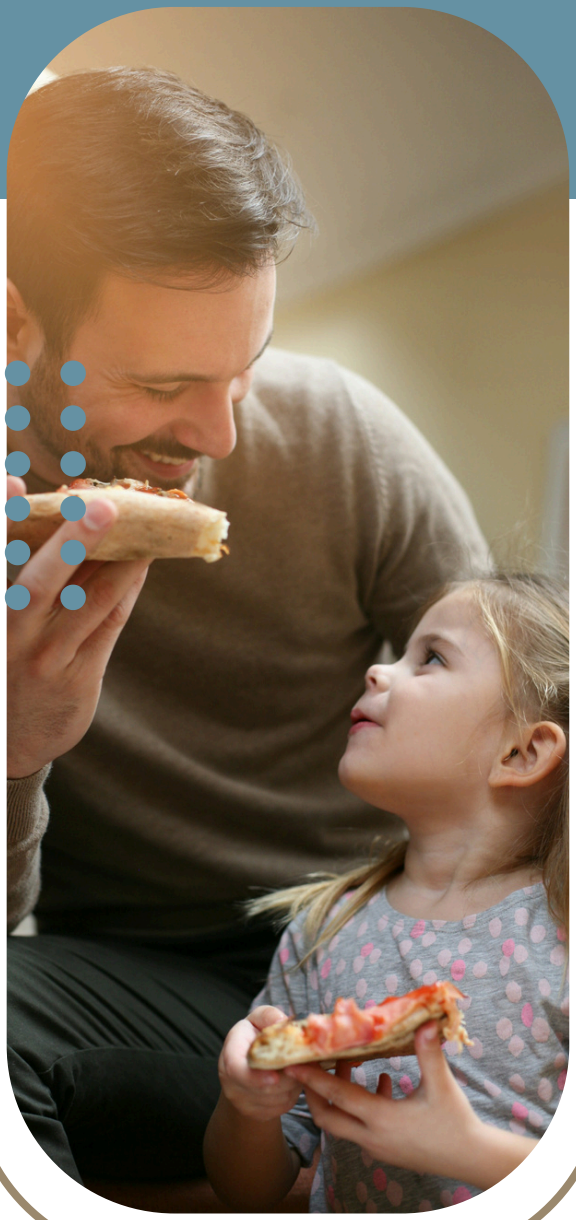
Shaping a Culture of Spiritual Formation

THE WAY WE LIVE



If, then, there is any comfort in Christ, any consolation from love, any partnership in the Spirit, any tender affection and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or empty conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, …
Philippians 2:1-5a

The way we live can be one of our most meaningful expressions of spirituality. The choices we make—and how we navigate life when things don't go as we choose—can preach to one another more powerfully than any sermon. We confess that God holds us close, even when we feel alone. We practice rituals that keep us centered in the whirlwind. We carry forward traditions bigger than ourselves, connecting us to the life of Jesus, our ancestry, and communities shaped by our values.

What culture are you creating by the way you live your life? We can stop unhealthy or harmful practices and start ways of life that are faithfully generous and remind us of the sacredness of our relationships with each other. With the help of God, we can become aware of what we are communicating by the way we live our own lives with intentionally rather than reactivity.

Let's name our values - and with the help of God, let's live them!

Create your family (think "found family"*) covenant by wrestling with these questions:

- **How do we share what we have?** What does generosity in our family look and feel like? Consider sharing time, resources, wisdom, care, safe spaces, etc.
- **What are our family* rituals?** Rituals are more than habits. A habit is what we do. A ritual is how we do it. Rituals have meaning, touch our emotions, and offer symbolism to the action. They have the power to heal and bring hope.
- **What are our family* traditions?** Unlike habits or rituals, which you can invent for yourself tomorrow, a tradition is inherited. It connects the past to the present. Traditions define who a group is. They reinforce a shared history and strengthen social bonds among family members, religious groups, or entire nations. Traditions are resilient. They survive across decades or centuries because the community actively chooses to keep them alive.

A WORD ABOUT "FAMILY"
WE CAN LET GO OF THE SMALL DEFINITION OF THIS WORD AS WE WELCOME FRIENDS AND OUR TRUSTED COMMUNITY INTO THIS SACRED PLACE IN OUR LIVES. ALL PEOPLE ARE MADE OF FLESH AND BLOOD - AND MADE IN THE IMAGE OF GOD. WE LIKE THE LANGUAGE OF "FOUND FAMILY". [THANK YOU LIVING MOSIAC LUTHERAN CHURCH.]

WRITE IT DOWN!

Generosity: How does our family want to share what we have? We give _____ to_____.

Rituals: What rituals matter to us? We are a family that does _____ because we_____.

Traditions: What is our families history? We believe_____about_____.

Example of a Family Covenant

+ We are a family that shares our home with our friends, our food with people who are hungry, and pitch in to help each other.
+ We celebrate by cooking special food or going out to dinner.
+ We pray and usually read before we go to sleep.
+ We believe that God loves us and that we are part of a family that loves each other even when people mess up.
+ We believe people are doing the best that they can and that we have to do our part to make the world better.
+ We believe we are loved even when we mess this up, so we practice forgiveness.

The Disclaimer:

It is never to late to become more generous. Rituals can always have a first time. Traditions can be revisioned when people move in and out of our lives.