**Mentor Orientation**

**“*We did this...in order to make ourselves a model for you to follow.”* - 2 Thessalonians 3:9**

**A Mentor Is:** Someone who has “gone before” another

**A Confirmand Is:** Someone engaging in Confirmation ministry, deepening their understanding of who God is and their vocation in the world

**Why do we encourage Mentoring?**

* Because that is how Jesus modelled his ministry
* Because it is effective – the more caring adults our confirmands and youth have, the more likely they will continue to be faith-filled adults
* Because it is life-giving and enriching for both mentor and confirmand
* Because practicing the Christian life is the best way to make it a daily, life-long endeavor

**Goal:** *To deepen faith, build relationships, and strengthen our Christian community by:*

* Giving the confirmand a chance to talk about faith with someone one-on-one
* Providing an example of Christian vocation and discipleship by sharing the Mentor’s faith
* Engaging in prayer together for each other and the world
* To worship together, as an example of how to live the life of Christ

**Safety and Confidentiality**

Jesus calls the Church to care for and protect the vulnerable. One of the ways we listen to that call is adhering to our Safe Haven Guidelines, which direct how we promote and ensure safety for all. Our Safe Haven Guidelines specify that all individuals interacting with children will complete a background check. This applies to everyone, even family. If you were a mentor last year, or have filled out a background check for Cross of Christ in the past, you do not need to fill out another background check.

If meeting in person, we encourage meetings in public locations. If meeting via phone or internet, we encourage that doors to rooms be left open, and screens face a doorway.

Conversations between the mentor and confirmand should be confidential, so as to encourage sharing and trust. Things shared by one person should not be shared with others unless permission is given. Confidentiality does have a limit, though – if the safety of the confirmand or someone else is in question, please speak with our Director of Youth Ministry, Laura Anderson, or Pastor Will.

**The Role of a Mentor**

* A Mentor is different than being a friend
* A Mentor doesn’t eliminate questions, but helps others figure out things on their own
* Isn’t afraid to say they don’t have it all figured out, but actively strives to deepen their faith
* Is dependable and expects the confirmand to also be dependable
* Is willing to share honestly with the confirmand

Tim Elmore, in his book *The Greatest Mentors in the Bible*, describes seven gifts a mentor gives. These gifts are all things you can give to your confirmand:

* **Accountability:** Hold your confirmand to their commitment. This may mean asking tough questions about commitments they have made – to parents, to God, to the mentoring ministry.
* **Affirmation:** Speak words of encouragement, acceptance, and support. Affirm their strengths and the ideas they have. Mentors often affirm their confirmands.
* **Assessment:** Look at current life situations, honoring their perspective and showing them another viewpoint. Your bigger vision of life offers new and different ways to view the world.
* **Advice:** This is a gift when given constructively. Listen to their ideas. Help them think through their reasoning. Be aware of when to listen and when to speak.
* **Admonition:** Help them avoid the pitfalls you have experienced. Show them how to walk on the right, healthy path through your words and actions.
* **Application:** Is there a way you can help them find a place to apply the truths you are talking about together? Finding a way to apply faith makes for a life-changing lesson.
* **Assets:** Utilize the assets that you have and are in your conversation. Use your knowledge, experience, care, hope, and presence, among other things to deepen this experience for the confirmand. If you feel you do not have enough assets in some area, ask for help! You are surrounded by people who care and want this to be a life-giving experience for the confirmand and for you.

**What do we do?**

1. Arrange to meet six times between **February 17 (Ash Wednesday) and April 4 (Easter)**. Mentoring should be the focus during the season of Lent.

2. Whether you are meeting online, over the phone, or in person, make sure that both the mentor and confirmand have privacy, but ensure it is also a public place (doors are open, meeting is not done in secret, parents/guardians know the meeting is happening).

- We will have a Zoom link available for Wednesdays after our Lenten worship, where we can make breakout rooms for each mentor/confirmand pair.

3. Conversation sheets – Six Sessions

- Church webpage *(www.cross-of-christ.org/learn/youth/confirmation/)*

- The first session is a “get to know you” session. If this is your second & third year with your same student, some questions might be the same as last year. That is ok – life has changed in the past year!

4. If you miss a session – try not to do more than two sessions at a time. *(If you must do two sessions at once to “catch up”, we ask you only do this only once.)*

5. Open with a short prayer (take turns with the confirmand)

6. Go through the highs and lows since the last time you talked. What went well, and what didn’t go well. Both mentor and student will share. Relationship is a two-way street.

7. Discuss the questions on the conversation sheet. Go through each section, writing out answers and sharing.

- It is ok to get off track.

- It is ok to not complete all the questions.

8. End with prayer for one another, things that came up in conversation, and whatever else is on your minds.

9. We do not collect the mentoring sheets, but provide them as guides to good conversation.