



# ed.network

A networking newsletter for the Christian Education ministries  
of the Indiana-Kentucky Synod of the ELCA

## Education and discipleship for adults

By Jennifer Tinker

When was the last time the adults in your church did something to build up their faith? Many churches are catching the vision of lifelong learning for their congregations. If your church would like to improve education and discipleship for adults, here are some ideas.

Remind people about their Baptism—at worship, at committee meetings, and in one-on-one conversation. It is in our Baptism that God claims us in Christ as God's children. And as God's children each of us is called to love and serve others just as Christ first loved and served us. By

### Online tool for Lifelong learning

By Karen Seykowski

Log onto [www.thelutheran.org/](http://www.thelutheran.org/) study and enter the keyword **Baptism**. Find the box in the right margin of the screen, and click search. Here are 3 selections worth visiting . . .

#9 - former Presiding Bishop Anderson - Baptism takes a lifetime to complete, not a 10 minute ceremony.

#19 - Norma & Burton Everist - Since You Asked: Garden Hose Baptism?

#40 - congregation and parents partnering to reach "The Church-reluctant Child."

emphasizing this Baptismal calling you remind people of God's grace and their opportunity to respond to that grace with joyful service and ongoing growth in their faith.

Start a Catechumenate program. The Catechumenate is an early church practice that has been revived in the modern church. It is an intentional and intensive time of training and discipling new believers and preparing them for their life of faith. In an age when many in our communities have very little experience with church and faith practices the Catechumenate is an excellent resource. Such a program takes seriously the unique questions of those who are coming to the faith in their adulthood. (Resources available from Augsburg Fortress.)

Teach intensive Bible studies at your church. Take the time to lead people through an entire survey of the Bible. Courses like Crossways and Bethel offer prepared materials for you to use in your congregation. Many people, even in churches, are biblically illiterate. Challenge your people to join Bible study classes and take the time to train leaders to teach intensive courses. (See page 2 for information about a grant for adult Bible study training.)

Make use of small groups and discussion groups. Many people

appreciate opportunities to talk with other Christians about faith and life. Choose a topic to study or discuss together. You could even gather around a book you each read and then come together to discuss. Many study materials are available to use in adult discussion groups.

Challenge the adults in your church to take on teaching roles. People learn more when they are teaching. Keep an eye out for those who have gifts for teaching and encourage them to put those gifts to work to benefit others in the church.

These are just a few ways to help adults learn and grow in their faith. Try some of these and ask nearby congregations what is working in their congregation.



**I'm Reproducible!** Please copy this issue of **ed.network** and pass on to:  
Christian Education staff, committee members, teachers and volunteers.

# How to choose curriculum

By Judy Scharpenberg

Do you ever feel bogged down by choosing curriculum for your Sunday school program? The following are steps to consider when faced with this challenge:

◆ Organize a group to review and select the curriculum. Keep in mind that it's important that there be someone in that group who can consider the theological content, someone knowledgeable in developmentally-appropriate methodology, and someone with a passion for integrating faith practices ... taking one from Baptism to Discipleship and beyond.

◆ Review the purpose of Christian Education as it applies to your congregation. Two excellent resources are "Basics of Christian Education" by Karen B. Tye and "Passing on the Faith" by Strommen and Hardel.

◆ Discuss strengths and weaknesses of the present curriculum with those who have used it. Determine if

new curriculum materials are needed.

◆ Critique a variety of curriculum materials in light of such criteria as: The organization of its resources; educational considerations such as clear and appropriate objectives, teaching/learning activities, teacher/student relationships, inclusivity, accompanying materials, life concerns; use of the Bible and theological concerns; additional considerations such as cost, attractiveness, reusability.

◆ Remember that methods and materials do not teach. People do! Balance your search for curriculum by enhancing teacher recruitment and training.

To acquire more detailed evaluation and selection considerations, you may want to check out the ELCA/education site on the web. Your synod Christian Education committee also stands ready to assist in any way they can.

## Synod Education leaders on retreat

By Carolyn Steinfeldt

The IN-KY Synod Education Committee met recently to study, plan, pray and play together. Gathering at the Lake James home of the chair, Judy Scharpenberg, those in attendance continued studying the Select course, "Rethinking Christian Education: Explorations in Theory and



Pictured here from left: Jennifer Tinker, Karen Seykowski, Judy Scharpenberg, and Carolyn Steinfeldt (not shown Nancy Hebel).

Practice." Between sessions there was time to enjoy the lake and a breakfast cruise!

## Developing Faith Practices for Youth

September 27, 2003

10:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Kendra Creasy-Dean, coauthor of [The Godbearing Life: the Art of Soul Tending for Youth Ministry](#), will be the keynote speaker for the day. She'll focus on developing faith practices with high school youth. For most Lutheran congregations, this is the *post*-confirmation group. The workshop is for all adults who care about youth. This event is being cosponsored by the University of Indianapolis and Disciples House for Youth. For more information contact Susan McMahon by phone: (317) 201-8149, or by e-mail: <smcmahon@cts.edu>.

## Want to improve your adult Bible studies?

Apply for a grant from the Synod's Academy for Mission Your congregation can get seed money from the Synod to enhance your Adult Bible study programming. The grant will help pay for training in one of the following studies: Crossways, Kerygma, Bethel or Disciple. For more information or to get an application form please call Terri Dillon at the Synod office: (317) 253-3522.