

COMMITMENT AND AFFIRMATION OF FAITH FORMATION LEADERS

INTRODUCTION TO THEME

EveryWhere and EveryWay: Calling One Another to Prayer!

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. I Thessalonians 5:16-18

Prayer is at the very heart of our relationship with God. It is absolutely central and indispensable to the spiritual life. As the early disciples yearned for Jesus to teach them to pray, we too long for that connectedness and assurance as we are called into a living relationship with Christ. This intimate relationship begins with a living God who has come to us in Jesus and promises to “be with you always to the end of the age.” These last words from Jesus in Matthew’s gospel are a promise from Jesus that we will never be alone – a living God is always at our side. Prayer requires a present tense understanding of God. Then, if God is with us always, we can “pray without ceasing.”

The 2008-2009 theme for the annual Christian Education program planner reminds people of all ages that there isn’t a time, occasion, or opportunity where we cannot turn to God in prayer. And there is certainly not just one form or expression of prayer! Our call to discipleship compels us to be diligent in our own regular personal and corporate prayer and to encourage one another in a vibrant faith marked by prayer. Calling one another to prayer means helping each other recognize, articulate, and respond to God’s ever-presence in the midst of all of life’s joy, grief, confusion, and surprise!

Brief Order of Service

Commitment and Affirmation of Faith Formation Leaders

The pastor may welcome children, youth, and adults to come forward to bless their teachers, guides, and facilitators for the coming year. At the appropriate time, teachers and leaders of all the congregation’s faith formation ministries are invited to come forward.

A lay assisting minister begins:

The following leaders have been called to teach and disciple in our midst this year:
Names are read as individuals come forward.

The pastor continues:

Today we give thanks and seek God's blessing on those who have lovingly presented themselves for the teaching ministry of our congregation.

The pastor addresses the teachers and leaders:

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do you hear the Word of God and do you embrace the joy-filled privilege of nurturing Christian growth by praying for and with those you teach?

The teachers and leaders respond:

I embrace this privilege and ask God to help and guide me.

The pastor continues:

Will you look to the example of Christ as you follow a prayerful life and encourage others to grow in discipleship through prayer?

The teachers and leaders respond:

I will and ask God to help and guide me.

The pastor addresses the congregation:

It is our privilege to affirm and send forth those who are called to the teaching ministry of our congregation and God's kingdom in this place. Will you commit to support them in their spiritual well-being through prayer, encouragement, and service?

The congregation responds:

We will, and we ask God to help and guide us.

The pastor continues:

Let us pray.

Gracious God, we come to you with thanksgiving for your son, Jesus Christ, sent among us to show us the way to open our hearts to God and to the world. Pour out your Holy Spirit upon all those who teach and learn that we may be filled with a desire to seek you in prayer, EveryWhere and EveryWay. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen