

Here are the preliminary notes for my presentation on Wednesday April 11, 2018.

We each have much to say on our designated topics. I plan to start with a written introduction followed by a few statements organized under four headings. This will ensure that I am concise and stay within the allotted timeframe.

Included in the pre-packet of materials is this set of preliminary notes, a list of the 40 faith skills that we build into young people and an invite link to view 3 video clips in a Vimeo Album. The total viewing time is about 10 minutes.

1. Why Faith Skills? (02:11)
2. Intro to Faith Webbing (02:36)
3. Intro to Outcome Based Ministry (05:38)

Respectfully Submitted, *Gary Pecuch*

### **Preliminary Notes**

I work in an ALC congregation, turned ELCA congregation, turned NALC congregation. My wife Laurie and I have been the paid youth ministry staff in the same church for 35+ years. We were both fulltime for most of that time period. We serve at St. John's Lutheran in Grove City, Ohio.

In 2009, I came to work for an ELCA Bishop (Southern Ohio Synod) and I also operate a web-based youth ministry coaching service that connects with 400+ congregations (mostly NALC).

I wear three hats. I continue to work in a congregation, in a Synod office, and I operate the web-based youth ministry coaching service.

My comments today come from the perspective of an "in the trenches" long-term youth director observing the lives and the culture of teens today.

My wife Laurie and I have a personal mission statement, which is "to train and equip God's people with the necessary faith skills to live out their personal calling in life".

Our strengths are developing planning systems for getting young people from "A" to "B". The goal being to equip them to live out their personal calling in life.

Laurie and I are committed to Faith Webbing, which is intergenerational faith formation and outcome-based ministry. We have developed a list of 40 faith skills that we build into young people in order to prepare them for their calling in life.

The faith skills cover five basic areas

1. Building Spiritual Disciplines into young people
2. Helping them to develop a healthy Biblical self-esteem
3. Furthering Personal Development
4. Story Talk Training—We train youth to speak in front of groups
5. And we train them in some basic Management skills

Below are the four areas on which I will make comment on April 11<sup>th</sup> followed by a few thoughts on each.

I am going to be idea oriented during the presentation. Introducing ideas that we can choose to unpack later if we wish. My intention is to put ideas on the table.

#### 1. Pre- Catechism Age:

We believe that young people's flight patterns are determined by age 12. By then, soccer kids are soccer kids, volleyball kids are volleyball kids, band kids are band kids, and church kids are church kids. Therefore, we believe young people need to be fully immersed in the life and mission of the church by age 12.

Thus, we like the concept of "early and often" and strive to spend as much time, energy, resources, and money on little people ministry as we do on any other age group.

The strength of our ministry to High School students rarely rises above the strength of what our children's ministry was like when they were younger.

### **Our ministry to children must be vibrant!**

#### 2. Catechism Age:

The Confirmation process is an initial gateway to seminary. If students have a positive, healthy, engaging, meaningful, faith building, church immersion experience...they are more likely to stay involved in the church. Thus, then open to the possibility of going to seminary.

If youth have a boring confirmation experience--they're out (of church and the thought of going to Seminary is probably gone)

### **Confirmation Ministry has to be the sharpest program we offer!**

3. What the future church might look like or not look like for the Millennials and the Centennials: Here are a few thoughts...

- It's all about Faith Communities
- The Digital Church
- Church Geographics
- Church A-la-carte and
- New Structures

4 What the role of the Pastor/Seminary might look like in future:

Pastors:

- Bi-vocational
- More SAM type programs (Synodical Authorized Ministers)
- Lay Member Training—identifying candidates in congregations and sending them to specially designed programs knowing they will stay in their home congregation.
- Authorized Worship Managers
- Pastors becoming equippers and trainers of church members in order to take on traditional Pastor responsibilities.

Seminaries:

- It's all about pipelines and feeder programs.
- Consider having a staff member dedicated to providing resources to congregations in the area of confirmation and high school ministry.
- For Middle Schoolers...consider creating Catechism resources for congregations.
- For High Schoolers...consider the development of course options that enroll students in Seminary for which they receive credit.

- For Both Middle School and High School Age...
  - Get them on Campus
  - Get them on Campus
  - Get them on Campus
  - Be creative in getting youth on campus. Consider offering Service Trip experiences with the Seminary location being used as the base-camp.
  
- Offer domestic and overseas summer excursions

**The Bottom Line:**

**God is changing the church....are we willing to change along with him?**