

Guidelines for Mentors / Sponsors

Consider a variety of adults across the life span in the congregation. When inviting adults to serve as mentors or sponsors, be clear about the expectations involved. Plan a get-together with all the mentors and Confirmands for some orientation. One way is to get together for a simple lunch after worship. Plan at least two or three gatherings during the year for mentors and youth together. Sometimes it helps adult mentors gather with one another. Participating in a group event or service project with the class is also advantageous for building relationships.

Characteristics desired:

- An adult of mature faith – someone who can give evidence of fulfilling his or her baptismal promises
- An Episcopalian - This is not to say that members of other denominations are not Christian. It is to recognize that some of the sharing and witnessing that the sponsors are asked to do come out of a particular tradition and theological understanding. There is a reason that we are Episcopalians, and this tries to support that reason.
- An active member of the congregation – faithful in attendance, stewardship and ministry; one who can serve as a personal representative of the parish and is a sign of the community's commitment to the candidate. This will give the young person another adult outside of his/her family with whom he/she can identify in the parish. The young person's parish life will, therefore, be strengthened if the adult is a regular and visible participant in the life of the parish.
- One who has a heart for engaging in conversation regarding faith issues

Responsibilities:

- To meet with the Confirmand regularly. The meetings do not have to be long, but should be in a public area or with others nearby (following safe church guidelines). Meet over coffee at a local diner, bookstore or fast food restaurant. Go to a movie. Please allow enough time for interaction.
- Attend gatherings/luncheons with all the Confirmands and sponsors, probably at the beginning of the Confirmation class and as the date of Confirmation draws near.
- Attend worship services involving the Confirmand: enrollment, Deanery Confirmation service, post-parish celebration
- Hopefully, after Confirmation the newly confirmed and sponsor will maintain a relationship in years to come.

Ideas for Building Community with a Group

Exercises:

- Building activities, initiative games and problem solving activities
<http://www.wilderdom.com/games/InitiativeGames.html>
- Team Building Games <http://www.gamesforgroups.com/photo.htm>
- Team Bonding: Where Work Meets Play <http://www.teambonding.com/programs.html>

Locations:

- Ropes Course at Camp Washington, Lakeside, CT 860-567-9623
<http://www.campwashington.org>
- Go Vertical! (Indoor rock climbing) Stamford 203-358-8767 <http://www.govertical.com/stamford>
- Stone Age Rock Gym, Manchester 860-645-0015 <http://www.stoneagerockgym.com/>
- Mountain Fun (indoor rock climbing) and Prime Climb (Indoor Ropes course), Wallingford 203-265-4006 <http://www.primeclimb.com/ropes.html>

Field Trip Ideas

*These are resources and are not necessary endorsed by the Diocese of Connecticut.
Call first for availability.*

Visit a Labyrinth:

- St. Paul's on the Green, Norwalk – Medieval – outdoor: brick 203-847-2806
<http://stpaulsnorwalk.org>
- Christ Church Cathedral, Hartford – indoor: canvas, portable 860-527-7231
- Mill Brook Farm Bed & Breakfast, Coventry – outdoor: rock & garden 860-742-9362
- Wisdom House, Litchfield – 7-circuit Classic – outdoor: bricks on grass 860-567-3163
<http://www.wisdomhouse.org>
- Mercy Center, Madison – outdoor: brick & stone 203-245-0401
<http://www.mercyctrmadison.com/>
- First Presbyterian Church, New Canaan – Medieval – indoor: canvas 203-966-5459
<http://www.ctlabyrinth.org/>
- Old St. Andrew's, Bloomfield – indoor, canvas 860-242-4660 <http://oldsaintandrews.org>
- Round Hill Community Church, Greenwich – outdoor: woodland, rock & garden 203-869-1091
<http://www.roundhillcommunitychurch.org>
- Bodies in Balance, Norwich – outdoor: rock & garden 860-889-4690
- Immanuel Lutheran Church, Meridan – Modified medieval – indoor: painted floor tile
- Trinity, Newtown – Medieval Chartres replica – indoor: canvas 203-426-9070
<http://trinitynewtownct.org>
- First Church of Christ, Woodbridge – 7-circuit classical – outdoor: rock & brick on grass 203-389-2119

Go on Retreat:

Retreat Centers in Connecticut

- Mercy Center, Madison, CT – 203-245-0401 <http://www.mercyctrmadison.com/> (Catholic: Sisters of Mercy)
- Holy Family Passionist Retreat Center, West Hartford, CT 860-521-0440 (Catholic: Passionist)
<http://www.holyfamilyretreat.org/>
- Convent of St. Birgitta, Darien, CT 203-655-1068 <http://birgittines-us.com/> (Catholic: Sisters of St. Birgitta)
- Incarnation Center, Ivoryton, CT 860-767-0848
http://www.incarnationcenter.com/conference_center.php (Episcopal)
- Oratory of the Little Way, Gaylordsville, CT 860-354-8924 <http://www.oratoryhealing.org/> (Episcopal)
- Emmaus Spiritual Life Center, Uncasville, CT 860-848-3427
- Wisdom House, Litchfield, CT 860-567-3163 (Catholic: Daughters of Wisdom)
<http://www.wisdomhouse.org/>
- Transfiguration Lodge (All Saints Center / Camp Washington), Lakeside, CT 860-567-9623
<http://www.ctdiocese.org/ministries/allsaintscc.shtml> (Episcopal: Diocese of Connecticut)
- Our Lady of Calvary Retreat Center, Farmington, CT 860-677-8519
<http://www.ourladyofcalvary.com> (Catholic)
- St. Edmund's Retreat, (Enders Island) Mystic, CT 860-536-0565
<http://www.endersisland.com/about/index.cfm> (Catholic: Society of St. Edmund)
- Trinita Retreat Center, New Hartford, CT 860-379-4329 http://www.msbt.org/mis_trinita.htm (Roman Catholic: Missionary Servants of the Most Blessed Trinity)

- Camp Wightman, Norwich 860-376-2179 <http://www.campwightman.org/> (American Baptist Church – Connecticut)
- Klesis Ministries – Center for Renewal, West Simsbury 860-651-1594 <http://www.klesis.org/contact.html>
- Trinity Conference Center, West Cornwall (860) 672-1000 <http://www.trinitywallstreet.org/center/index.html> (Episcopal: Diocese of New York)

In neighboring states:

- Adelynrood Conference and Retreat Center, Newburyport, MA 978-462-6721 <http://www.adelynrood.org> (Episcopal: The Society of the Companions of the Holy Cross)
- Sisters of St. Margaret’s Convent, Boston, MA and St. Margaret’s, Duxbury, MA 617-445-8961 <http://www.smbos.com/> (Episcopal: Sisters of St. Margaret)
- Society of St. John the Evangelist Monastery, Boston, MA 617-876-3037 and Emery House, West Newbury, MA 978-462-7940 <http://www.ssje.org/retreats.html> (Episcopal: Cowley Brothers)
- Holy Cross Monastery, West Park, NY 845-384-6660 <http://www.holycrossmonastery.com/> (Episcopal: Benedictine)
- St. Aidan’s Retreat House, Brewster, NY 845-278-4854 <http://www.chssisters.org/> (Episcopal: The Community of the Holy Spirit)
- Convent of St. Helena, Vails Gate, NY 845-569-7051 http://www.osh.org/convents/convent_menu.htm (Episcopal: Order of St. Helena)

Day or Overnight Trips:

- Washington National Cathedral <http://www.cathedral.org/cathedral/>
- Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York City <http://www.stjohndivine.org/>
- The Cloisters, Fort Tryon Park, New York City <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/medny/cloister1.html>
- Diocesan House, Hartford <http://www.ctdiocese.org> (archives)
- Christ Church Cathedral, Hartford <http://www.cccathedral.org/>
- Overlook Farm (Heifer Project working farm), Rutland, MA 508-886-2221 <http://coy.ne.client2.attbi.com/RR-HeiferProject.html>
- Glebe House, Woodbury <http://theGLEbehouse.org>
- Trinity Church, Wall Street and St. Paul’s Chapel, New York City <http://www.trinitywallstreet.org/>

How to Plan a Mission Trip

Begin at least 6 months in advance

- Meet together: pray, read scripture, sing
- Learn about the culture of the destination
- Participants engage in the planning
- Not didactic learning – getting “equipped” for mission
- Adults act as mid-wives, drawing out the individual gifts of the group
- Focus on community
- Project is to “share faith”
- Fundraising
 - Parishioners can donate frequent-flier miles
 - Talent Shows, dinners, etc. in which the candidates actively participate

During and Post Trip:

- Reflection is paramount
- Centered in prayer

Resources:

- Emily Perow – Diocesan Youth Ministries Coordinator eperow@ctdiocese.org 860-233-4481x128
- Adventures in Mission (AIM) - <http://www.adventures.org/a/> an interdenominational short-term missions organization. Their objective is “to mobilize and equip the Church for missions by bringing the mission field to the Church's doorstep. The dramatic changes in our world have ushered in a new era in missions. A new breed of missionary is helping to win the world for Christ: The Short-term Missionary. It is this new generation of missionaries that AIM seeks to assist.”
- Mission Trip Prep Kit Leader's Guide: Complete Preparation for Your Students' Cross-Cultural Experience by Kevin Johnson (Zondervan)
- Group Workcamps Foundation <http://www.groupworkcamps.com/2005/default.asp> “We serve churches by providing mission-trip experiences, helping children, youth and adults grow in their relationship with Jesus.”

Resources for Service and Mission

In 1990, Search Institute released *Effective Christian Education*, a national study of 560 congregations in six denominations. In the area of 'service it was discovered that the more time youth give in service to the community through the congregation, the greater the loyalty and bonding to the church. Similar patterns emerged when young people indicated the likelihood that they would be active in church as adults. Finally, young people who were most active in service throughout their congregations were almost twice as likely to say, "it is very important to me to belong to a church," when compared to those who had been involved in no service. Service is an important vehicle for nurturing loyalty. Bonds among those who serve side-by-side also keep young people active because of their shared experience and the relationships that form through the service.

All the following aspects of a Christian education program for youth which nurtures growth in faith (as measured in the *Effective Christian Education* study) are integral to a service-learning model:

- Emphasizes intergenerational contact
- Uses life experience as occasion for spiritual insight
- *Creates a sense of community in which people help one another develop faith and values*
- Encourages independent thinking and questioning
- Involves youth in service projects

- Emphasizes values and moral decision making
- Emphasizes responsibility for poverty and hunger
- Teaches the Bible and core theological concepts (which service-learning does through preparation and debriefing)
- Teaches youth how to be friends and make friends
- Helps youth develop concern for other people.

Using understandings of adolescent development, these types of service projects are appropriate:

For grades 6-8 (Middle school):

- Planting trees in a park
- Setting up a recycling program
- Helping a family move
- Collecting food for a foodshelf
- Helping in a a homeless shelter
- Tutoring younger children
- Visiting nursing homes
- Being peer ministers

For grades 9-12 (high school)

- Designing and conducting a campaign to educate others about the environment
- Writing letters to Congress or city officials
- Organizing a product boycott
- Educating adults about racism
- Teaming with adults to build or renovate a home
- Tutoring younger children
- Assisting/running an after-school programs

Service and Mission Resources:

Pilgrimage: Seeking Signs of Christian Witness in Church and Community (Office of Children's Ministries, ECUSA). To make your pilgrimage truly useful, this booklet provides thoughts and questions for reflection while groups are preparing, on site, leaving the site, and for later reflection; originally organized for a Children's Advocacy Conference, and tied in with the *Children's Charter*, the questions have strength and meaning for any one going on pilgrimage or a mission trip.

Beyond Leaf Raking: Learning to Serve/Serving to Learn by Peter L. Benson and Eugene C. Roehlkepartain (Search Institute) offers specific ideas for youth service projects.

The Kid's Guide to Social Action by Barbara A. Lewis (Free Spirit Publishing) How to solve the social problems you choose - and turn creative thinking into positive actions - transform your creative thinking into actions that make a difference in your neighborhood, town or city, state, country - even the world. Written for kids (and adults) on topics: life beyond the classroom, power skills - writing letters, using the internet, petitions; working with the government; resources of Webster, telephone # and address; tools - samples of petitions, surveys, resolutions ready for photocopy and how to write a grant.

Facing the issues: Creative strategies for probing critical social concerns by Robert E. Myers (Zephyr Press) conflict resolution activities and social concerns awareness exercises

Alternatives for Simple Living's mission has been to equip people of faith to challenge consumerism, live justly and celebrate responsibly since 1973 as a protest against the commercialization of Christmas. Its

annual Christmas Campaign ("Whose Birthday Is It, Anyway?") is a popular resource published annually. <http://www.simpleliving.org/>

UNICEF (www.unicef.org) is the United Nations Children's Fund, represented in over 158 countries. Their focus is on immunization, girls' education, HIV/AIDS, child protection, war and poverty of children under the age of 18 years. There are many areas of work of this organization:

- *Voices of Youth* is a global website for young people to explore, discuss and take action on issues that effect them. <http://www.unicef.org/voy/voy.html>
- *Young Leaders* gives examples of stories of how young people are taking action for making the world a better place. http://www.unicef.org/people/people_leaders.html

An Asset Builder's Guide to Service-Learning Planning a service project? Going on a work or mission trip? This resource ties together service learning and the asset framework in congregational, school, and youth program settings. □ This guide is intended for those who seek to develop strategies for doing service learning that maximize its asset-building potential. Search Institute, 1999. 184 pages. □

Growing Up Generous: Engaging Youth in Giving and Serving by Eugene C. Roehlkepartain, Elanah Dalyah Naftali, and Laura Musegades. Based on a two-year research project, this book creates a mosaic of what is happening and what could happen in American Jewish and Christian congregations to cultivate in young people a deep and lasting commitment to giving and serving. It highlights critical culture shifts needed in congregations and highlights the importance of both culture and practices in cultivating generosity among young people. Alban Institute, 2000. 197 pages.

Mission: Hunger

- *Bread for the World* is a nationwide Christian citizens movement seeking justice for the world's hungry people by lobbying our nation's decision makers. <http://www.bread.org>
- *CARE* is an international humanitarian organization fighting global poverty. <http://www.care.org/>
- *Children's Fund for Christian Mission* and its international associated organizations are dedicated to serving the needs of children worldwide--primarily through person-to-person programs, in the context of the family and community, and using a developmental approach through national and local partners. <http://www.papaink.org/gallery/home/artist/display/161.html>
- *CROP Walk* is a community based fund raising event that raises money for local hunger-fighting agencies as well as the international relief and development efforts of Church World Service. <http://www.churchworldservice.org/CROP/>
- *Food for the Poor* ministers to spiritually renew impoverished people throughout Latin America and the Caribbean by raising funds and providing direct relief assistance to the poor, usually by purchasing specifically requested materials and distributing them through the churches and charity organizations already operating in areas of need. <http://www.fordforthepoor.org/>
- *ECHO* - Educational Concerns for Hunger Organization is a non-profit, Christian organization actively involved in networking global hunger solutions that specifically focuses on small rural farmers and urban gardeners in developing countries. <http://www.echonet.org/about.htm>
- *Heifer Project International* combats hunger, alleviates poverty, and restores the environment by providing appropriate livestock, training, and related services to small-scale farmers worldwide. <http://heifer.org>
- *The Society of St. Andrew* (<http://www.endhunger.org/index.htm>) is an ecumenical Christian ministry that feeds the hungry all year long by saving fresh produce □ that would otherwise go to waste and giving it to the needy. It includes several projects:
 - *The Potato Project* has redirected 45,000-pound loads of fresh, nutritious produce to soup kitchens, Native American reservations, food pantries, low-income housing areas, local churches, and other hunger agencies for distribution to the poor. □

- *The Gleaning Network* coordinates volunteers, growers, and distribution agencies to salvage food for the needy.
- *Harvest of Hope* is an ecumenical study, worship, and action mission trip program

Mission: Housing

- *Habitat for Humanity International* (HFHI) is a nonprofit, ecumenical Christian organization dedicated to eliminating substandard housing and homelessness worldwide. Habitat is founded on the conviction that every man, woman and child should have a simple, decent, affordable place to live in dignity and safety. <http://www.habitat.org/>
- *Trevor's Campaign* (blankets for the homeless) It was a cold December night in 1983 on which 11-year-old Trevor Ferrell saw a TV newscast about people living on the streets. Those images stirred compassion deep within Trevor and he pleaded with his parents to take him to downtown Philadelphia so he could give his blanket and pillow to the first homeless person he met. In ensuing weeks, with the help of family, classmates and neighbors, Trevor made nightly trips into Philadelphia to distribute food, clothing and blankets to the needy. Through the generosity of hundreds of citizens and businesses, this little "campaign" soon grew into places to stay and an entire array of programs. <http://www.trevorscampaign.org>
- *Tools of Hope and Blanket* is a program of Church World Service that supplies blankets, tents and emergency supplies to people in crisis. Curriculum and resources are available. <http://www.churchworldservice.org/tools-blankets/index.html>

Mission: The Environment

- *Children's Rain Forest* (Monteverde Conservation League) is a private, nonprofit association of Costa Rican and International members. It manages and preserves for current and future generations the Children's Eternal Rain Forest (Bosque Nuboso Eterno de Los Ninos) , which contains over 50,000 acres; the largest private reserve in Central America. The MCL carries out various projects related to research, education, protection, habitat rehabilitation and volunteering. Its mission is to conserve, preserve and rehabilitate tropical ecosystems and their biodiversity. <http://www.monteverdeinfo.com/>
- *National Arbor Day Foundation* helps people plant and care for trees and encourage the celebration of Arbor Day to advance global environmental stewardship for the benefit of this and future generations. <http://www.arborday.org>
- *Pennies for the Planet* is a project of the World Wildlife Federation (WWF). Since 1994, it has been alerting people around the world to problems faced in various eco-regions around the world, while inspiring people to take action. This annual campaign has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for conservation projects around the world... one penny at a time. <http://www.worldwildlife.org/windows/pennies/>
- *Save our Streams* (SOS) is a national watershed education and outreach program of the Izaak Walton League of America <http://www.iwla.org/SOS/>

Mission: World Peace and Conflict Resolution

- *Friends of the Americas* was established in 1984, it has reached out with a hand of friendship to more than 500,000 people suffering from wars, natural disasters and poverty in Latin America. <http://www.friendsoftheamericas.org/index.html>
- *Kids Meeting Kids* promotes peace, fair treatment of young people and a better world <http://www.kidsmeetingkids.org/>
- *People for Peace* simply provides resources and links for building peace. www.people4peace.net
- *Religious Task Force on Central America and Mexico* – International peace leadership programs for ages 13-18. Designed to counter racism and violence among youth <http://www.rtfcam.org/>