

So...Just What Is A 'Mentoring or Teaching Congregation'?

Kansas District Family Life Academy – 2007

The Kansas District – LC–MS recognizes the Family Life Academy as an intentional congregational leadership development process designed for congregations whose mission and vision includes family ministry. "The Academy will lead them to become a regional mentoring congregation for family ministry. It is expected that these congregations will partner with the District, Synod, and institutions of higher learning to help shape family ministry in their area."

What does this mean?

The Family Life Academy is still in a developmental stage. The first training class will become pioneers in expanding a vision for family ministry beyond their congregation. The Kansas District Family Life Committee will provide on-going support, training and resourcing for the trained congregational leadership teams.

The primary goal for a 'mentoring congregation' is to share a vision for multiplying family life ministry.

How is this done?

Some possible outcomes might include...

- Partnering with another congregation in your circuit or region:
 1. Have your Pastor make contact with another Pastor sharing a vision for family ministry
 2. Have members of your leadership team make a presentation ("What is Family Ministry?" or "Here's what we have learned") to a group of leaders from their congregation
 3. Ask them..."How can we partner with you?"
 4. Identify a lay person from their congregation who might partner with your teams' ministry efforts to attain 'hands-on' learning
- Hosting a reunion, workshop, retreat (marriage), or conference ('Passing on the Faith'). Invite regional congregations to participate in an event that you might conduct.
- Sharing resource ideas with other congregations (e.g. devotions, web page, events)...be creative!
- Writing articles for the Kansas District publication, "Worker's Together," and the Kansas District Supplement of Lutheran Witness by telling the story of your congregations' journey of family ministry.

Further outcomes:

The Family Life Committee desires all Academy teams to be in attendance at an annual event designed for the purposes of "keeping the teams' batteries charged." This event might coincide with another existing event (i.e. "Passing on the Faith," an upcoming Academy module, a mentoring congregation's sponsored event, etc.) or be a stand alone meeting designed to continue the networking of all Academy congregations, provide supplemental training and team building, and/or partner with the District family Life Committee for future ministry.

In Closing...

Mentoring congregations will continue to sustain a focus on the family ministry process within their parish by raising up programmatic strategies that will further the vision for practicing family ministry.