



# Story Starter Ideas

The focus of this year's Discipleship Challenge is to help the synod - leaders, congregations, members - connect with each other through sharing stories. Stories connect us, and through stories we are sharing God's story for us and for the world. There is no right or wrong way to do this. If the tools on the Discipleship Challenge page help you share stories – great! If you think the questions there aren't helpful – by all means, create your own! If you have a better way to get people to share life and faith stories – go for it!

The Discipleship Challenge is not intended to be an additional program, but a tool to incorporate into what you are already doing to help people hear and share life and faith stories. Here are some ideas on how you might do that:

## General Use:

- Use Story Starter questions at the beginning of your church council meeting, board meetings, music rehearsals, youth group meetings, Sunday school, WELCA meetings, Bible studies...anytime people gather together.
- Use one question per meeting – or all five STORY questions for the month.
- Set a time limit – respond to as many of the five STORY questions as you can in that time frame.
- Split into pairs or smaller groups. You might rotate people for every question or keep the same partners.
- Write one question each Sunday on a piece of paper and place on the tables in the fellowship hall during coffee hour – or make a table tent with all STORY questions to put on the table. Let the curiosity of your members self-direct them into answering the question with each other.
- Write one question per slip of paper, and hand to group members as they arrive at a meeting. Have them ask the questions with the group.
- At the end of worship, ask a sending question for members to ponder with each other as they depart for Sunday school, adult forums, Sunday school...or as they head home to consider during the week.
- Print out the STORY bookmarks and place in the pew racks or send home with families.
- Post a question each week on your church Facebook page or print in the newsletter.
- When you invite members to share the peace, invite them to also answer a simple question (“what’s your favorite season of the year?”)
- Have church staff respond to the questions in your monthly newsletter.
- Write questions on pieces of paper and post on walls throughout the church (or in the bathroom stalls!) where people will notice them and start conversations as they walk by.
- Write the five STORY acronym categories on separate pieces of paper and place in a bowl – enough for one per group member. Have group members pull out a piece of paper and ask a question from the category they drew.
- Have youth use the five STORY questions to interview adults in the congregation.
- Have adults use the five STORY questions to interview youth in the congregation.

***Do you have more and better ideas? Share your ideas on the Northeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA Facebook group!***

## Ministry Leaders:

Many of the ideas above can be adapted to use as you meet with ministry colleagues. Consider using Story Starter questions with your church staff, or at networking meetings, text studies, Conference meetings, events...wherever you gather with other leaders in ministry.