



Giving Testimony and Witness

About this Faith Practice

Testimony involves recognizing God’s action in our lives and finding ways to express it meaningfully with others. This can take as many forms as the gifts that God has given us. It takes courage to give witness because of the deeply personal nature of faith journeys. For some this comes easily, but for others it may be more difficult. To share our experiences in a public way involves the risk of becoming vulnerable. However, choosing to share our story creates opportunities for relationships and growth even in the face of resistance. Sharing our faith celebrates and honors encounters with the Holy and gives us a chance to deepen our awareness of God’s work in our lives. Giving testimony invites others to do the same. Giving witness and listening to others’ stories joins us to the universal story of God’s ongoing transformative work in creation.

Let’s Begin...

Now that you’ve downloaded the files for your faith practice and age group or setting, you can get started planning one or multiple sessions:

1 Open the .pdf file for your age group or setting. Choose an Exploration, the approach you think will help your group to best experience the faith practice. Choose any one of the following Explorations to use for one session:



Discovery



Scripture



Discipleship



Christian Tradition



Context and Mission



Future and Vision

Note: If you’re planning multiple sessions, you can follow the order suggested above or feel free to use any order that fits the needs of your group. Some groups may choose to start with Scripture and then see where that leads them. Others may be more ready to act in their community and might want to start with Context and Mission.

2 Locate the Exploration you’ve chosen

3 Look through all 9 activities and select the ones you would like to do with your group.

- If you're planning a 30–45 minute session, choose 3 activities.
- It is best to select at least one activity from Exploring and Engaging, at least one from Discerning and Deciding, and at least one from Sending and Serving.
- For 45 minutes to 1 hour, choose 4 or 5 activities.
- For a 1½ to 2-hour session, you can use all 9 activities.

Tip: Look for this symbol  to find activities designed for Easy Preparation (able to be done with minimal preparation using supplies normally found at the church).

4 Make copies of any handouts () related to your activities. Order posters (), if using art (see "Ordering Posters," below).

Use of Art, Music, and Scripture in Faith Practices

Faith Practices activities include many opportunities to grow in faith through the use of scripture, music, and art.

Ordering Posters

If you choose activities that use an art image, you or your church will need to purchase posters of the art by clicking on the link provided in the activity. If you wish to use art, you will need to plan ahead, since it takes 1 to 2 weeks for the posters to arrive after you place your order.

Art

Six posters are used with the faith practice Giving and Receiving Hospitality and may be ordered by clicking on the links provided.

From Imaging the Word Poster Sets:

"The Adoration of the Kings" by Jan Brueghel, the Elder (<http://www.tinyurl.com/fp-uCCR>)

"Hopi Virgin Mother and Child" by John Giuliani (<http://www.tinyurl.com/fp-uCCR>)

"The Sower" by Van Gogh (<http://www.tinyurl.com/fp-uCCR2>)

From Art.com

"The Blind Pedlar" by Robert McGregor (<http://www.tinyurl.com/fp-aprm>)

"Blind Feeling" by Diana Ong (<http://www.tinyurl.com/fp-apdo>)

"Baptism" by Hullis Mavruk (<http://www.tinyurl.com/fp-aphm>)

Music

Three music selections are used with Giving Testimony and Witness. We have selected music which is easily found in many hymnals. A web link is provided to give more information about each music selection.

“Tu’ has venido a la orilla,” Tune: Pescador de Hombres, 8.10.10 with refrain
(<http://www.tinyurl.com/fp-orilla>)

“You Are Salt for the Earth, O People,” Tune: Bring Forth, irr. with refrain
(<http://www.tinyurl.com/fp-salt>)

“Siyahamb’ ekukhanyen’ kwenkhos’,” Tune: Siyahambra, irr South African song
(<http://www.tinyurl.com/fp-siyahamb>)

Scripture

Twelve Bible passages are used with Giving Testimony and Witness, two with each Exploration.

Discovery	Genesis 24:34–67	Acts 16:16–34
Scripture	John 9:1–41	Psalm 116
Discipleship	Mark 8:27–38	Psalm 25:1–10
Christian Tradition	Isaiah 52:7–10	2 Peter 1:16–21
Context and Mission	Matthew 5:13–20	Romans 8:31–39
Future and Vision	2 Timothy 4:6–8, 16–18	Philemon 1:1–25

Writing Team for Giving Testimony and Witness

Maren Tirabassi	<i>Worship, Music, Arts, and Story</i>
Aimee Reid	<i>Adults</i>
Dylan Richards	<i>Seekers and New Church Participants</i>
Callie Smith	<i>Young Adults</i>
Tom and Hannelore Nalesnik	<i>Older Youth</i>
Brett Carter	<i>Youth</i>
Katie Watson	<i>Older Children</i>
Barbra (Bonnie) Hardy	<i>Young Children</i>
Susan Steinberg	<i>Multiage and Intergenerational</i>
Devoree Crist	<i>Living Practices in Daily Life</i>
Sandi Marr	<i>Workshop Rotation</i>
Amelia Dress	<i>United Church of Christ Identity and History</i>
Rebecca Johnston	<i>Editor</i>
Patrice L. Rosner	<i>Managing Editor</i>
R. Kenneth Ostermiller	<i>Project Coordinator</i>