



Class of 2021 PASSAGE handbook for leaders

FEAR NOT, FOR I HAVE REDEEMED YOU;
I HAVE CALLED YOU BY NAME, YOU ARE MINE.
WHEN YOU PASS THROUGH THE WATERS,
I WILL BE WITH YOU;
AND THROUGH THE RIVERS,
THEY SHALL NOT OVERWHELM YOU;
WHEN YOU WALK THROUGH FIRE
YOU SHALL NOT BE BURNED,
AND THE FLAME SHALL NOT CONSUME YOU.
FOR I AM THE LORD YOUR GOD,
THE HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL, YOUR SAVIOR
ISAIAH 43:1-3

The Lord Bless You and Keep you.
Make God's face shine upon you,
And be gracious to you.
The Lord turn God's face toward you
And give you peace.

May God's favor be upon you.
And a thousand generations.
And your family and your children.
And their children, and their children.

May God's presence go before you.
And behind you, and beside you
All around you, and with you.
God is with you. God is with you.

In the morning, in the evening.
In your coming and your going
In your weeping, and rejoicing
God is for you. God is for you.
Amen.

Introduction

The ELCA Youth and Young Adult Ministries are excited to invite 2021 High School graduates to a small group ministry called PASSAGE, a sister ministry to the ELCA Young Adults small group ministry, abide.

PASSAGE will connect recently graduated high school students from across the country with one another and young adult small group leaders. The communities formed through PASSAGE will be centered on mutual support and wrestling with faith and life in times of transition.

Our scripture for this ministry comes from Isaiah 43: 1-2, “Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you”.

The ongoing purpose of PASSAGE is to connect high school seniors to the next part of their faith journey as a “rite of passage” into ELCA Young Adult Ministry.

Using the PASSAGE curriculum means that the high school graduates who are part of your group will be part of a broad and beautiful diverse community of young adults across the ELCA and beyond. They will be part of a larger network of faithfulness, prayer, and love.

We are committed to helping our recent high school graduates find their next faith community and stay connected to the ELCA. We need their wisdom, gifts, and voices in the church. When finished with PASSAGE, please encourage your small group to register for abide, a young adult virtual community created by [ELCA Young Adult ministry](#), as well as help them connect to a congregation, campus ministry, and any of the many other ELCA opportunities for young adults.

We are excited that PASSAGE groups will be led by awesome leaders like you! In this handbook, you'll find training and resources, PASSAGE videos and discussion questions, and links to Young Adult opportunities. Your group might encompass seniors from your congregation, or synod, or seniors at summer camp, or incoming freshman at your campus ministry, or a group we put together from youth who found us on www.elcayouthministry.com.

EVALUATION – When your 6 sessions are completed, please let us know how your group went and share ideas for future topics! This is really important to our team to hear from you! <https://forms.gle/Sv7zMUTLj6ZQmRAT9>

Our contact information is at the back of this handbook. Feel free to reach out to any of us if you need assistance.

The 2021 ELCA PASSAGE team

Resources and Training

❖ Outline for a PASSAGE Gathering

Send the link to the video to each participant and one of the discussion questions that you want them to ponder. Ask them to watch the video before the group gathers.

60 minutes

- Spend 5 minutes with a gathering/opening prayer.
- Spend 15 minutes to check in.
- Spend 30 minutes in group discussion.
- And the final 10 minutes wrap up and close with prayer.

❖ Things to Consider

- Confirm the day and time that you are meeting will work for everyone. Adjust as needed so that all can join in.
- Create a covenant – sample ideas included
- Send an email with the video link and discussion question on the week's topic far enough in advance that the youth will have time to watch and think about the question.
- Offer the same blessing and prayer each week. Ask for prayer requests.
- Create a climate of openness, trust, affirmation, awareness, and respect
- Check-Ins: what they need most during this time is connection as they leave high school friendships and relationships and don't know what their new relationships will look like, so leave lots of space for people to just catch up and be in community.
- Have some questions ready. Have some additional questions ready just in case the discussion questions are not working. These can be as simple as sharing Highs and Lows from the week, asking where people are finding God or asking for people to share when and why they laughed most recently.
- As the leader or facilitator, try to keep everyone engaged by asking quieter voices to share and helping louder voices recognize when to speak up and when to listen.

❖ Online Etiquette

Once most people have arrived, please give a quick technology orientation

- Familiarize people with Cameras On/Off and Mute/Unmute options
- Decide together if people will be muting when they aren't speaking. Muting not only prevents talking over one another, it blocks background noise, which can be distracting.
- Make sure everyone knows how to use the chat function. Note that people can message everyone or individuals in the gathering.
- Use your own name and consider adding your pronouns, church or ministry in the name. Rachel Alley she/her – PASSAGE Leader

❖ Practices and Principles for Being Church Together Safely

When we meet virtually, we want to be loving, inviting, and safe in the same way as we seek to be in person. The following are our community's expectations for how everyone will act when we meet digitally. These guidelines were created to keep our whole community safe and feeling welcome.

- **Be kind to one another:** as a Christian community we are always called to love others as Jesus loves us, this is especially true online and during difficult times! We exist as a church to support each other and trust that our digital meetings will be filled with Christ's love in how we treat each other.
- **Confidentiality:** part of loving each other is respecting what is private for others, so we do not share information shared verbally, in chat boxes, or on video cameras out of love and respect for others. Please do not share what others talk about with the group. Do not take pictures or post unless you have permission of the person or entire group.
- **Help each other out:** We ask that we would all use our gifts to help each other during these meetings. If you're super tech savvy and some others aren't, patiently help them understand the tools we're using; put notes and prayer requests in the chat for everyone to keep.
- **Use appropriate language:** while boundaries may be difficult to find during this time as we are all bringing church, school, and work into our homes, we still ask that you use appropriate and kind language when attending church digitally. If you wouldn't say something in the church building, try to find different wording when online as well. Affirmations go a long way! Promote healthy and holy conversations.
- **Dress appropriately:** While we are all enjoying more casual wardrobes these days, we ask that you keep your clothing appropriate (free of words, pictures, or symbols that could be offensive)

- **Be Mindful of Time:** Strive to begin and end meetings on time as a sign of respect for people’s time and attention. From the first meeting, be clear about how the time will be spent.
- **BIG** What boundaries need to be in place for you to keep your integrity and for people to only make good and generous assumptions about you. Perhaps think about this in advance so you are prepared.
- **Posting** Don’t say or post anything that you don’t want others to see. Your spouse, your pastor, your mom.
- **You are the adult** You are the elder and have the “power” in this role. Should there be any accusations, you will be at fault, you will be responsible. Remember you are representing your ministry and the church.
- **Conversations** Lead appropriately. This is a sacred trust. Don’t say anything that could be misunderstood or misconstrued. Don’t attempt to counsel. Don’t share your own experiences.
- **Friending** As the staff leader – you should not request friending or following of teens. You can accept their request if you feel comfortable. But don’t meet online or physically outside of the group.
- **Dual Relationships** Do not enter into a dual relationship in which you are both spiritual leader and partner/lover/friend. Either end your role as leader or talk with a trusted mentor about other strategies for protecting the relationships of all involved including the other small group participants.
- **Mandated reporting** Anyone working with persons 18 and under who has reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or neglect should report it

❖ **Resources**

[Small Group Icebreaker Questions](#)

[Zoom Youth Group Games](#)

❖ About 18 year olds

By age 18, many teens are feeling a combination of excitement and fear about the future. There are a lot of decisions about life after graduation and 18-year-olds invest a lot of time into thinking about what type of life they want once they're on their own.

Teens who have plenty of life skills often feel ready to move out of the home and begin the next chapter. But those who experience a lot of self-doubt may regress a bit as they think about entering the next phase of their lives.

Physical Development

By age 18, both boys and girls have physically matured. Puberty is over and they've usually reached their full height.

Boys may continue to grow a little more facial hair and their voices may still change a bit more, but otherwise, they're living in adult bodies.

Many teens grow more comfortable with their bodies as they've had some time to adjust to the rapid changes they experienced during the earlier teen years.

- Growth has tapered or ended completely
- Less preoccupation with body changes
- Have reached sexual maturity

Their brain isn't yet fully developed. Drinking alcohol and other drugs at this age could affect their brain development.

Emotional Development

Eighteen-year-olds are beginning to figure out where they will fit into the adult world. It is a time for big changes that comes with a lot of freedom and happiness, along with feelings of nostalgia and apprehension.

Most 18-year-olds are more comfortable seeking advice from older people and their parents again. They realize that they need some guidance and help to navigate the adult world and they're more open to feedback than they were during their younger teen years. They have much better control over their emotions by this age. And most 18-year-olds are equipped to deal with a wide variety of emotions. The fear of the future—as well as the fear of failure—can still be problems, however. Some 18-year-olds will begin to resolve these issues successfully, while others will continue to struggle well into their adult lives.

Key Milestones

More comfortable seeking adult advice

Accepts adult responsibilities

Able to manage emotions in a socially acceptable manner

Better sense of self

Greater concern for others

Normalize the teen's emotions. Many 18-year-olds think they're alone in their fears or they think they're the only one without a solid plan for the future. Remind teens they don't have to have every aspect of her future career planned out.

Social Development

Most 18-year-olds have had intimate relationships. They have a better understanding and awareness of their sexuality at this age.

Peer groups have less of a pull on 18-year-olds. They're better able to evaluate their opinions without adopting the same ideas as everyone around them. Many of them take strong stances on social issues.

They have an emerging ability to make independent decisions and to compromise. This serves them well as they are forming new friendships and intimate relationships.

While most of them aren't ready to settle with a partner, many of them are beginning to think about what they want in a future mate.

Key Milestones

Able to evaluate their own opinions instead of going along with the crowd

Intimate and emotional relationships are important

Accepts adult responsibilities and self-reliant making their own decisions

Thoughts about his or her purpose in life

Most have developed a clear sexual identity

Tip

Talk about friendships beyond high school. Discuss whether the teen thinks they'll maintain some of their current friendships, even if their friends go in different directions after high school. Talk about meeting new friends down the road while also honoring some of his friendships from the past.

Cognitive Development

By age 18, teens exhibit a lot of adult-like thinking (even though their brains are yet done developing). They can think abstractly and they're often future-oriented. They're able to understand, plan, and pursue long-range goals.

They often show a lot of concern for the future. They may feel overwhelmed at times when people ask them what they're doing to with their lives. Many of them are philosophical and idealistic as well. They have a greater capacity to use insight, however. Have ability to express their ideas. Deeper view of life and may be involved in community issues.

Speech & Language

Most 18-year-olds speak differently to their peers than they do their family or teachers. They may use a fair amount of slang and they're usually adept at using social media acronyms.

The teens who read the most are likely to have the most expansive vocabularies. By now, they're able to communicate like other adults.

Play

Most 18-year-olds enjoy spending time and talking with their friends. They often have similar hobbies and interests as other adults.

Key Milestones

Makes future plans

Sets long-term goals

Able to make their own schedule and plans

Tip

It's normal for parents to experience a sense of grief as their child turns into an adult. Make sure the teen doesn't allow their parent's sadness to burden them as they head towards their own future and the big world, nor make them feel guilty for leaving home. These are natural feelings for parents. At 18, remind them their parents' work is far from over but your relationship with them will shift. Most likely from disciplinarian, to more of a role of mentor and guide.

Other Milestones

18-year-olds may be concerned with morality. They may be continuing to evaluate values and the type of life they want to live as an adult.

They may be thinking about their spiritual beliefs. It's normal to question the beliefs they held during childhood and to consider if they want to continue practicing a certain religion or continue carrying out certain spiritual activities in adulthood.

Help them to see opportunities and connect through campus ministries, clubs, Lutheran Student Movement, Young Adults in Global Mission, LuMin (Lutheran Campus Ministry), etc. with the people in your small group. This will take a little work on your part. But beneficial to them.

❖ When to Be Concerned

When they share about changes in appetite, ongoing body image issues, behavior changes, academic fear of failure, or changes in sleep patterns could be signs a teen is experiencing a mental health issue.

Substance abuse issues may also become a problem at this age. It is not your job to fix them. But you might want to offer suggestions on where to get help. Parents, pastor, trusted adult in church, school counselor.

National Suicide Hotline – 1-800-273-8255

Child Help USA National Hotline – (170 languages) help youth who are suffering from abuse 1-800-4-A-Child

Any Crisis – support is available – TEXT HELLO to 741741

At Risk Youth – Boys Town National Hotline 1-800-448-3000

Trevor Project Lifeline - Confidential Suicide Hotline for LGBTQI Youth – 855-488-7386

LGBT National Help Center – support for LGBT youth talk line 1-800-246-PRIDE (7743)

Trans Lifeline 1-800-656-HOPE

National Human Trafficking Resource Center 1-888-373-7888 or text HELP or INFO to 233733

Substance Abuse/Mental Illness 1-800-662-HELP (4357)

Teen Dating Violence Hotline 1-866-331-9474 or text loveis to 22522

National Domestic Violence 1-800-799-7233 (SAFE)

National Runaway Switchboard – supports runaway youth 1-800-Runaway (786-2929)

National Eating Disorders Helpline – 1-800-931-2237

❖ Creating a Group Covenant

Forming a group covenant is an integral part of the PASSAGE ministry. We believe that setting group expectations helps us accompany one another more honestly, safely, and faithfully. Covenants also help us hold one another accountable in love. We expect that every PASSAGE group will spend time during their first meeting discussing how they want to be in community together and what tenants of community they are committed to upholding. They will then commit, as a group, to these tenants.

A few ways to establish a group covenant:

1. Work from an Example Covenant

a. Leader sends the Example Covenant below before the first meeting so participants have time to reflect on each tenant. Invite individuals to reach out to you with concerns. You may include these or similar questions in your initial email: What in this Covenant stands out to you? Why? What number did you especially like? What number do you still have questions about? What would you add or change?

b. During the first meeting, pose these questions again, one at a time, both vocally and in the written chat.

c. Make sure everyone has time to at least share one tenant that resonated with them and one they have questions about.

d. Ask for each person to vocally commit to the conversation guidelines / covenant. Pray over the group and covenant.

e. Note to the whole group that the group can revisit / add to the covenant document as your relationships change and grow.

2. Brainstorm your own covenant

a. Before the first meeting, look over the ELCA values and/or the values of the community/organization you are working with (congregation, campus ministry, camp) and decide what guidelines for conversation are essential with respect to those values. Feel free to use the Example Covenant as a guide.

b. At the beginning of your time of group covenant building, say and type this or similar questions in the chat: Why is it important to you to be a part of this group? What do you hope to experience in this group? What words describe how you want to be treated in conversation? How will we handle conflicts or disagreements in this group? How will we make sure everyone in this group gets a chance to share? What is one value that is important to you in group discussion (i.e. respect, confidentiality, trust, assuming good intent, etc.)?

c. Share your blank screen (Microsoft Whiteboard, Miro, or Word work well for this).

- d. Give participants a few minutes to think, and then invite them to share their answer to the first question you posed. Go through the questions one at a time, recording the answers on the blank document.
- e. Spend some time after the meeting summarizing / aggregating similar responses. Send the revised document out to the group before your next meeting. Invite individuals to reach out to you with concerns.
- f. At the second meeting, ask: Is there anything you would add to or change about this covenant?
- g. Ask everyone to vocally commit to the conversation guidelines and pray over your group discussion / covenant.
- h. Note to the whole group that the group can revisit / add to the covenant document as your relationships change and grow

Covenant Example

1. **Be fully present, extending and presuming welcome.** Set aside the usual distractions of things undone from yesterday and things to do tomorrow. Welcome others into this story space and presume you are welcome as well.
2. **Listen generously.** Listen intently to what is said, listen to the feelings beneath the words. As Quaker Douglas Steere writes, “To listen another’s soul into life, into a condition of disclosure and discovery may be almost the greatest gift we can offer to another.”
3. **Author your story.** We all have a story. Some might say, “I don’t have a story” or “a story worth telling,” but you do, and the world needs to hear it. You must claim authorship of your own story and learn to tell it to others so they might understand you be inspired by you and discover what calls you to be who you are, to do what you do or to love what you love.
4. **We come as equals.** We don’t have the same gifts, limits, or experiences, but no person’s gifts, limits or experiences are more or less important than another's
5. **It is never “share or die.”** You will be invited to share stories in pairs and in a large group. The invitation is exactly that. You will determine the extent to which you want to participate
6. **No fixing.** We are not here to set someone else straight, right a wrong, or provide therapy. We are here to witness God’s presence and movement in the sacred stories we share.
7. **Suspend judgement.** Set aside your judgments. By creating a space between judgements and reactions, we can listen to another person, and to ourselves, more fully.
8. **Turn to wonder.** If you find yourself becoming judgmental or cynical, try turning to wonder: “I wonder why she shared that story or made those choices?” “I wonder what my reaction teaches me?” “I wonder what he’s feeling right now?”

Adapted from the Forum for Theological Exploration and the Center for Courage and Renewal

ELCA – Who are We? What’s important to know?

We are church

We are what God has made us – people whom God has created by grace to live in union with Jesus Christ and has prepared to live faithful, fruitful lives by the power of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 2:8-10). In Jesus Christ, God has reconciled us to God and to each other. As we gather around word and sacraments, this life in Christ is what defines, shapes and guides us as a community of faith, the church.

By God’s grace we can and do live confidently and generously in this community of faith and in service of others, amid the mysteries and paradoxes of this life in Christ – including our human limitations and failings, and the ambiguities, uncertainties and suffering that we experience.

We are Lutheran

We are a church that walks by faith, trusting God’s promise in the gospel and knowing that we exist by and for the proclamation of this gospel word. We proclaim Jesus Christ crucified and raised from the dead for the life of the world. As the apostle Paul wrote (Romans 1:16-17), and we echo in our Constitution (2.02), we are not ashamed of this gospel ministry because it is God’s power for saving all people who trust the God who makes these promises. “We are to fear and love God, so, that we do not despise preaching or God’s word, but instead keep that word holy and gladly hear it and learn it” (Small Catechism). God’s word, specifically God’s promise in Jesus Christ, creates this liberated, confident and generous faith. God gives the Holy Spirit who uses gospel proclamation – in preaching and sacraments, in forgiveness and in healing conversations – to create and sustain this faith. As a Lutheran church, we give central place to this gospel message in our ministry.

We understand to be Lutheran is to be ecumenical – committed to the oneness to which God calls the world in the saving gift of Jesus Christ, recognizing the brokenness of the church in history and the call of God to heal this disunity.

We are church together

Just as God has joined us to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ in baptism, we are also joined to others, not only in the ELCA and The Lutheran World Federation (LWF), but in all communities of Christian faith around the world. In Christ none of us lives in isolation from others. Jesus is our peace and has broken down the walls that divide us – walls of judgment, hatred, condemnation and violence – and has made us into one, new human community (Ephesians 2:14-15). This spiritual communion depends only on God’s mercy that comes to us in the word and sacraments. That alone is enough for unity, and so we yearn for this communion with all Christians at the Lord’s table.

Because God gives us our unity in Christ, we are able to see and respect the diversity within Christ’s body. We receive it as a gift and embrace it, rather than treating it as a threat or a problem to be solved (1 Corinthians 12:12-13). We respect and honor the diversity of histories, traditions, cultures, languages and experiences among us in the ELCA and in the larger Christian community of faith. We seek full participation of all in the life and work of this church and will

strenuously avoid the culture of any one group becoming the norm for all in the ELCA. And we strive to address the ways that racism, sexism, classism and other forms of injustice limit participation and harm people, communities and the whole body of Christ. In all these relationships the ELCA serves reconciliation and healing with other Christians, while repentantly acknowledging its failings and wrongs, trusting in God's forgiving mercy.

We are church for the sake of the world

Christ has freed us from sin and death, even from ourselves, so that we can live as ministers of reconciliation in loving and generous service of our neighbors (2 Corinthians 5:17-18). In Jesus Christ, all of life – every act of service, in every daily calling, in every corner of life – flows freely from a living, daring confidence in God's grace.

Freed by the transformative life of Christ, we support ELCA members as they give themselves freely in transforming service with the neighbor. Through a wide range of daily vocations and ministries, we nurture faith, build alliances and gather resources for a healed, reconciled and just world. As church together, we faithfully strive to participate in God's reconciling work, which prioritizes disenfranchised, vulnerable and displaced people in our communities and the world. We discover and explore our vocations in relation to God through education and moral deliberation. We bear witness to the love of God in Jesus Christ through dialogue and collaboration with ecumenical partners and with other faiths. In all these ministries, God's generosity flows through us into the life of the world.

ELCA Mission & Vision

Our mission

Together in Jesus Christ we are freed by grace to live faithfully, witness boldly and serve joyfully.

Our vision

A world experiencing the difference God's grace and love in Christ makes for all people and creation.

Our values

Our values are grounded in faith, in our biblical and Lutheran confessional sources and our love of God and neighbor. They speak to the way this church lives and practices our faith, and they will guide how we journey forward in Christ as church together.

Forgiveness and reconciliation – We are reconciled to God by God's forgiving mercy. Forgiveness and reconciliation flow from what God has made us to be in Jesus Christ and what God is doing with us in the world. As a people of God, we embody forgiveness in speech, action and relationships, and our ministry in reconciliation is foundational.

Dignity, compassion and justice – Each person is created in God's image. We respect this God-given right to dignity and, inspired by the life of Jesus, show love and compassion for all people. Through proclamation of the gospel, through worship and as servants of God working for healing and justice in the world, we uphold and seek to protect the dignity and human rights of all people.

Inclusion and diversity – As Christ's church, we value the richness of God's creation and offer a radical welcome to all people, appreciating our common humanity and our differences. We are a church that does not view diversity as a barrier to unity. We recognize and will challenge dynamics of power and privilege that create barriers to participation and equity in this church and society – for women, people of color, minority ethnic groups, people with disabilities, people who are marginalized or living in poverty, and the LGBTQ community.

Courage and openness to change – Because we trust in God's promise and understand faith to be a living, daring confidence in God's grace, we are emboldened to embrace learning and change in our spiritual and institutional journey as church. This means we are open to new ways and willing to take risks to discover God's plan for this church.

Faithful stewardship of God's creation and gifts – As church together, faithful stewardship is about holding to God's purpose and ensuring the responsibilities and resources that God has entrusted to us are used with great care and with accountability to God, to each other and those served by this church.

PASSAGE 2021 Videos and Discussion Questions

Video #1 Welcome <https://youtu.be/Y-x4vDGzwrU>

Isaiah 43:2

Welcome to PASSAGE! PASSAGE is a small group ministry from ELCA Young Adult, ELCA Youth, LuMin, and the ELCA Youth Gathering where graduated high school seniors can talk with peers about this unique life transition. Each week, we'll post a video reflection from a young person with discussion questions for group reflection. This week, Maggie introduces us to the theme verse and purpose of PASSAGE. Discussion questions in comments! We ❤️ the class of 2021!!

Discussion questions

- Why did you sign up to be a part of PASSAGE?
- What questions are you bringing with you into PASSAGE?
- What are you excited about or most looking forward to as you graduate high school?
- What are you worried, disappointed, or sad about?
- In the text from Isaiah we hear God say: "When you pass through the waters I will be with you". What's a time you have experienced God's presence?
- How do you hope your faith might grow in this next step in life?

Video #2 Community <https://youtu.be/sDBVB5flvcY>

1 Peter 4:10

Discussion questions

- This week in PASSAGE we're hearing from Divine, a college student in Lincoln, NE about how her communities of faith have been there for her and how she found them! For information about the programs she mentions follow these links!
[ELCA Young Adults](#)
[ELCA Campus Ministry](#)
- What faith communities have you found a place in in the past? What was it like to share that community with others?
- Have you been a part of a community that you struggled to belong to? What was that like?
- What kind of faith community do you think you will need after high school?
- 1 Peter talks about how to support one-another in community and Divine shared her musical gift with her campus ministry, what gifts do you have to offer to your communities?
- How can we work together to make our communities a place for more people at different places in life and faith?

Video #3 Change <https://youtu.be/ySZSszYNk-U>

Luke 5:1-11

Discussion questions

- What changes in your life have taken courage? Where did you find that courage?
- At first, some of the disciples weren't fully bought-in when Jesus called them, but they ultimately said yes to the opportunity to follow. Have there been times when you were surprised by saying yes to a new opportunity?
- What changes are on the horizon for you that you will need courage to face?
- Are there any changes you're worried about? Any you're excited about?

Video #4 Relationships <https://youtu.be/iiWAPYzZTU0>

Acts 8:26-40

In this transitional time in life, a lot is changing, including relationships! Your relationships with family, friends, mentors, and other folks in your life may look very different in the coming days. This week ELCA young adult, Ashley, shares about her experience with changing relationships, reflects our call into relationship as people of God, and reminds us that no matter what, God is with us.

Discussion questions

- How have your relationships changed already?
- How might they change over the next few months? How does that feel?
- Having a safe community of people to hang out with similar values is important. Is it easy or hard for you to make new friends? What has helped in the past?
- What are relationships that are important for you to maintain, even as they evolve?
- Ashley shared that Romans 12:8 calls us to "love and make peace" with everyone, but that doesn't mean "anything goes" in our relationships. What was a time you made peace by apologizing to someone in a relationship? How did your relationship change afterward?
- What relationships have been important to your faith life?
- How has your relationship with God changed?

Video #5 Self-Awareness <https://youtu.be/WhzAJoymRj0>

2 Corinthians 13:5a

This week we're talking about the importance of getting to know and love ourselves. Self-love and self-awareness are transformative in a life of faith, and Ellie shares a little bit with us about God's wide embrace of our authentic selves!

Discussion Questions

- Corinthians 13:5 asks us to examine ourselves, to reflect and be honest with ourselves about how we're treating ourselves, our communities, and God's world. Is it easy or difficult for you to reflect on your own actions? How do you do this?
- The passage from Corinthians also reminds us that no matter what we DO, we should also remember that Jesus Christ is in us. We are already "enough" just as we are and God loves our whole selves! How does that make you feel? Are there parts of yourself it's hard to love? Easy to love?
- Ellie talks about reflection, accountability, and trust as great ways that we can grow in self-awareness. Where have you seen each of these in your life? How do you hope to grow in these areas in the coming year?
- One of Ellie's tools to grow in self-awareness was to journal and write down feelings. How are you getting to know yourself better? Are you trying new hobbies? Journaling? Talking to trusted mentors? Praying about it? Going to therapy? Breaking out of your comfort zone?
- What impact do you think getting to know yourself better has on your relationship with God?

Video #6 Hope <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FBuW9ftdbGk>

Philippians 4:8-9

Welcome back to PASSAGE and our last week together officially. This week meet Alyssa Cobb who speaks on hope.

Discussion Questions

- Alyssa talks about the transitions that are happening this summer and the uncertainty of the future, what 3 words describe how you are feeling?
- Have you ever been in a situation where you felt all hope was gone? How did you get through and who did you rely on most?
- There are many stories in the Bible where characters "hoped" for good but were still put in difficult situations that got worse before they got better (Hebrews 11 – gives a number of these example about faith and hope). God will surely put a new person in your life who needs you to point them to hope, are you ready?
- Final Goodbyes – Invite them to Abide, and other Young Adult Ministry Opportunities.

Opportunities for Young Adults to Get Involved

Young Adult Back Packing Trip with Rainbow Trail August 8-14, 2021

<https://rtlc.campbrainregistration.com/>

Find a Campus Ministry – www.luminelca.org

LuMin Student Referral <https://www.luminelca.org/refer-a-student/>

Abide <https://sites.google.com/view/2020fallabide/welcome?authuser=0>

ELCA Young Adults YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCVoxcHGCAZbUpsTLbUWk3lQ/videos>

Internships, Fellowships, and Jobs at www.ELCA.org/careers

Advocacy <https://www.elca.org/Our-Work/Publicly-Engaged-Church/Advocacy>

ELCA Youth Gathering <https://www.elca.org/YouthGathering/Attend/Volunteer>

Lutheran Outdoor Ministries – Camps and Retreats <https://www.lomnetwork.org/jobs/>

LOM Summer Staff Camp Match up App <https://www.lomnetwork.org/summerjobs/>

Young Adults in Global Mission <https://elca.org/Our-Work/Global-Mission/Young-Adults-in-Global-Mission>

Urban Servant Corp www.urbanservantcorps.org

Lutheran Volunteer Corps www.lutheranvolunteercorps.org

Border Servant Corps www.borderservantcorps.org

Twitter, Instagram and Facebook: [@ELCAYoungAdults](https://twitter.com/ELCAYoungAdults)

Follow Up and Stay Connected

ELCA Youth and Young Adult Ministries and the PASSAGE and abide programs are committed to the ongoing work of connecting young people to one another and supporting them in their own leadership in ministry. We invite you to be a part of this!

1. Connect young people to the abide community and to other opportunities to be in relationship with young people through ELCA Young Adult Ministries! You can do this by contacting us on social media or via email and letting us know you started a group!
2. Join the conversation online. We want to hear about your discussions and see how your groups are interacting. Remember to tag and follow @ELCAYoungAdults.
3. Ask questions! ELCA Young Adult Ministries wants to be a resource for all who are passionate about building a church that embraces the gifts of young people. We are here for you.
4. Pray for your fellow group members and this whole community!
5. Share your awesome ideas. The abide community is growing and changing all the time, and it all happens through the leadership of gifted folks like you. We want to hear your dreams and partner in this work of the gospel! In the future we hope to be able to help facilitate in-person gatherings, retreats, and trainings. Until then, we are excited to connect with you on the internet!

Be sure to watch for fall 2021 abide groups!

Contact ELCA Young Adults

Email: Daniel.Kirschbaum@elca.org

Office: 773-380-1746

Contact ELCA Youth Ministry

Email: Rachel.Alley@elca.org

Office: 773-380-2808

Contact ELCA Campus Ministry

Email: Lamont.Wells@elca.org

Office: 773-370-7148

Contact ELCA Youth Gathering

Email: gathering@elca.org

Office: 888-411-ELCA