

Dear Confirmation Families:

I am excited to announce that we will soon be entering the Lent season which means it's time for Lenten Mentoring, or LENTORING! **ALL Middle School Confirmation students are asked to identify and meet with a faith mentor five (5) times between February 4-April 5 (see dates below) to attend worship and go through a provided conversation guide.**

As part of confirmation, we strive to help students develop faithful relationships with others, not only among students, but also with caring and affirming adults. Faith mentoring gives us a way to foster those relationships and gives students a chance to hear stories of faith from other people who are living it in their own unique ways every day.

Mentors must be either:

- an adult or current 11th or 12th grader who attends SOTV
- OR Someone who your child sees as having a meaningful faith life and wants the opportunity to nurture their confirmation experience with them!

Some ideas of people you might ask to be your mentor:

Family! Godparents, grandparents, aunts/uncles, older cousins, or family friends	Group leaders from previous years of VBS, Shepherds Kids, or Zone45	A person who has been instrumental in your faith journey
Camp counselor	Sports coach or Scouts Leader (has a connection to SOTV or to their faith, is caring and affirming, and comfortable talking about their faith)	a member of church council or leadership team at SOTV
member of a group here at SOTV (Senior Choir, Worship assistant, Usher, etc.)	Your student confirmation friend's parents. ex: Betty and Connie are Confirmation BFF's! You-Betty's parents- know Connie's parents so your student could ask Connie's parents to be Betty's mentor, and you could be Connie's mentor!	Your student's mentor from last year. If you don't remember who they were—ask me! I have records!

If you aren't able to identify someone to be your mentor, we have great volunteer mentors excited to get to know you and learn about your faith! You can choose to be matched with a volunteer mentor from the congregation as well.

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What do you need to do to prepare for Lenten Mentoring?

- First, read through this packet:
 - o Pages 1-4 are yours to keep and has all of the student information.
 - o Pages 5-8 should be given to the person you ask to be your mentor. All of the mentor information is included there, and it will help them understand the commitment they are making as well as next steps for them to sign up as your mentor.
 - o Page 9 gets turned into Marissa once you have a mentor lined up or decide to be paired with a volunteer mentor.
- Next, pray and think about who you would like to ask to be your mentor. As soon as possible, give them pages 5-8 from this packet.

By January 21, 2026, turn in page 9 to Marissa (attached to this packet).

Digital copies of this packet are available online at sotv.org/cyf. Additional paper copies can be found on the slat wall opposite the Children, Youth, and Family office.

In community and connection-praying for guidance and positive, faithful conversations,

Marissa Bachtel

Middle School Youth Ministry Director

Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church

O: 952-985-7350

marissa.bachtel@sotv.org

Frequently Asked Questions – Mentee/Student/Family

When will I meet with my mentor?

Families and mentors will select 5 times from the list below during the Lenten season

2/4 (Mandatory for students, families/parents, and Mentors)	Mandatory: Lentoring Kick-off! Mentors, Mentees, and Parents/Families Meet! (attend at your Mentees normal Confirmation hour-4:30p, 5:45p, 7:00p)
2/11	Holy Week Experience-Lentoring pairs attend together! (attend at your Mentees normal Confirmation hour-4:30p, 5:45p, 7:00p)
2/18	Ash Wednesday (attend at your Mentees normal Confirmation hour-4:30p, 5:45p, 7:00p)
2/25	Lent Mid-Week Worship (attend at your Mentees normal Confirmation hour-4:30p, 5:45p, 7:00p)
3/4	Lent Mid-Week Worship (attend at your Mentees normal Confirmation hour-4:30p, 5:45p, 7:00p)
3/11	Lent Mid-Week Worship (attend at your Mentees normal Confirmation hour-4:30p, 5:45p, 7:00p)
3/18	Lent Mid-Week Worship (attend at your Mentees normal Confirmation hour-4:30p, 5:45p, 7:00p)
3/25	Lent Mid-Week Worship (attend at your Mentees normal Confirmation hour-4:30p, 5:45p, 7:00p)
Any Sunday between 2/8 and 4/5 (Easter)	Optional dates for make-up meetings if a Wednesday is missed: Attend Sunday worship together (*Easter Sunday) Sunday Worship services are at 8:00a, 9:30a, and 11:00a
4/2, 4/3	Optional: Attend Maundy Thursday or Good Friday worship service together (times TBD)

What safety measures are being taken? If you find your own mentor or are matched with a mentor:

SOTV is committed to creating and maintaining an environment of safety whenever possible. Families are also encouraged to meet their student's mentor, get to know them, and attend worship together. Mentoring meetings occur during public worship or programming times at Shepherd of the Valley. Background screening is completed on all mentors, volunteers, and staff. Adults over the age of 18 must consent to a background check to be eligible as a mentor. All mentors will participate in orientation prior to meeting with their mentee for the first time. As part of that training we review mandated reporting requirements, and safety practices for working with students.

What happens if I'm sick or something comes up and I can't meet with my mentor?

Please have your responsible adult/parent contact your mentor ASAP if you can't be present for a meeting you agreed upon. You can choose an alternative date from the list above or choose a weekend worship service to attend together between February 4 and April 5. If you're not able to find an alternative time during that window, please contact marissa.bachtel@sotv.org

What will my mentor and I do?

You'll meet for about an hour to attend worship together and then have a conversation. We give you a guide every week with some questions you can talk about and an optional activity to do together. The conversation guides will be available every time you come for worship and a digital copy will be emailed to families and mentors, as well as available online at sotv.org/cyf.

Can two students have the same mentor?

Yes. Please, no more than 2 students per mentor to be considerate of the experience for everyone involved.

Can a high school student be a faith mentor? Yes. Current 11th or 12th graders who are not part of your immediate family can be a mentor for a middle school student.

What if I can't find someone to be my mentor?

You can choose to be paired with a volunteer mentor from the congregation. We match students and mentors based on your survey so that you have some things in common and can get to know a little about one another before we start!

I chose to be matched with a volunteer mentor. Now what happens?

Students and their families will be notified of their mentor's name and contact information prior to February 4. Students and their families are responsible for reaching out to mentors to finalize their meeting dates.

Other Questions?

Contact: Marissa Bachtel, Middle School Youth Ministry Director, Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran • Church O: 952-985-7350 • email: marissa.bachtel@sotv.org

Hello Prospective Mentor!

During the upcoming season of Lent, middle school confirmation students at Shepherd of the Valley have been asked to identify someone as a faith mentor. Mentoring gives students the opportunity to see and hear how others live out their faith and gives both of you a chance to explore your God-given gifts. It is a rewarding opportunity for both student and mentor, and an easy way to help pass on faith and the love of God to others! If you are reading this letter, that means someone already thinks you would be a great mentor!

What does saying “YES!” to this opportunity mean for you?

- **Being Prayerful** – This process starts and ends with prayer! Be praying for whether you should accept your mentoring invitation and for the student you may/will be mentoring.
- **Being Equipped** – In order to make this a safe and meaningful experience for both you and your mentee, we will review tips for interacting with teens, safe child policies, and share a preview of the conversation guides and worship services during our Mentor Orientation.
 - **All mentors are expected to attend orientation on either Sunday, January 11 from 12:00-1:00 pm or Monday, January 26 from 6:00-7:00 pm.**
- **Being Present** – One of the most important things you can do as a mentor is simply show up.
 - **It is Mandatory to attend Mentoring Kick-Off on Wednesday, February 4** with your student mentee or where you will meet your student mentee and their parent/responsible adult during their confirmation hour. (you will be informed of that time by your mentee or by Marissa).
 - Mentoring pairs will attend worship together and have a conversation with your mentee five (5) times between February 4 - April 5. See table below for all possible opportunities to meet with your mentee!

We are looking for “AAA” people to be mentors – Available, Authentic, and Affirming.

Students are hoping for someone who will be honest and real with them, open and willing to listen as well as share, and affirming of their experiences, feelings, and faith. A faith mentor needs to appreciate and care for their mentee/student just as they are, and remind them that they are loved by God. Have you made your decision? Tell the student who asked you what you’ve decided either way.

If you say YES!...complete the Mentor Registration at sotv.org/cyf by January 25, 2026. We will be in contact with you soon after your registration is complete. We look forward to seeing you soon! If you’re not able to commit at this time, thank you for considering the opportunity. We encourage you to be in continued prayer for the student who asked you!

In community and connection-praying for guidance and positive, faithful conversations,
Marissa

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Frequently Asked Questions – Mentors

What happens if I'm sick or something comes up and I can't meet with my mentee?

Please let your mentee's family know ASAP if you can't be present for a meeting, you agreed upon. You can choose an alternative date from the list below or choose a weekend worship service to attend together between 2/4 and 4/5. If you're not able to find an alternative time during that window, please contact marissa.bachtel@sotv.org

What will my mentee and I do?

You'll meet for about an hour to attend worship together and then have a conversation. We give you a guide every week with some questions you can talk about and an optional activity to do together. The conversation guides will be given to mentors during orientation, they're available every time you come for worship, and a digital copy will be available online at sotv.org/cyf.

Do I need to worship at Shepherd of the Valley to be a Faith Mentor?

It is hopeful that you would have a connection to or attend worship at SOTV. With that, our broader intention is that you have a connection to your faith and are comfortable to speak about and help guide a middle school student along their faith journey. We have asked to students to seek out a person in their who "Someone who your child sees as having a meaningful faithful life and wants the opportunity to nurture their confirmation experience with them".

Can two students have the same mentor?

Yes. To be considerate of the experience for everyone involved, please no more than 2 students per mentor.

Can a high school student be a faith mentor?

Yes. Students in grades 11 and 12 who are not part of the mentee's immediate family may be mentors.

Help! I was asked to be a Mentor! What do I do?

1. **Don't Panic.** Students think you are cooler and more interesting than you think you are.
2. **Remember that you have important life experience to share,** and students do too! Students want to hear from you, and they want you to listen and learn from them.
3. **Confirmation students are incredible humans!** They are curious and considerate. They are respectful and fun. They often seek and wonder about things that no one has the answers for, so don't expect to have all the answer-create a meaningful and welcoming space for folks to bring their authentic self. In fact, it is much better when you are learning alongside your mentee and sharing your experiences together. It's not as scary as it sounds! And remember... God equips those who are called (Isaiah 41:9-10).

I chose to be matched with a student. Now what happens?

Students and their families will be notified of their mentor's name and preferred contact information prior to February 4. Students and their families are responsible for reaching out to mentors to finalize their meeting dates. If you don't hear from your mentee by the morning of February 4, please contact marissa.bachtel@sotv.org.

What safety measures are being taken?

SOTV is committed to creating and maintaining an environment of safety whenever possible. Families are also encouraged to meet their student's mentor, get to know them, and attend worship together. Mentoring meetings occur during public worship or programming times at Shepherd of the Valley. Background screening is completed on all mentors, volunteers, and staff. Adults over the age of 18 must consent to a background check to be eligible as a mentor. All mentors will participate in orientation prior to meeting with their mentee for the first time. As part of that training we review mandated reporting requirements, and safety practices for working with students.

- Volunteer mentors who elect to be matched with a student will have their name and preferred contact information shared with their mentee prior to February 4.
- Students and their families are responsible for reaching out to finalize meeting dates.

Other Questions?

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Student Mentoring Form

Return to Marissa by January 21!

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Confirmation Hour (circle): 4:30p 5:45p 7:00p

Group Leader: _____

If you attend worship, what time do you usually attend?

 Saturday at 5:00p Sunday at 8:30a 9:45a 11:00a

Select ONE:

☐ I have chosen a faith mentor.

Mentor's Name: _____

How you know them: _____

☐ I would like to be partnered with a
volunteer Faith Mentor.

**Please complete the questions below to
help us match you with a mentor.**

What hobbies or interests do you have?

What activities or sports do you do?

What is your favorite part of confirmation
so far?

What type of music or movies do you
enjoy?