



Adult Education Classes and Groups

January 2017

Want to be added to the Adult Education electronic communications loop? If so, please contact Mary Taylor-Johnson, Adult Education and Membership Coordinator, at mary@faithatfirst.com or 847-864-6181.

Classes

Rule of Life – Sunday, January 8, 9:15 a.m. in the dining room.

As classes resume in the new year, explore the concept of developing and following a “Rule of Life,” an idea developed by St. Benedict to guide life in his monastic community around 540 AD and an idea that is helpful for many Christian disciples today. What are the key elements of your days/weeks/months that help you live a balanced, grounded, and faithful life? Led by Keri Rainsberger.

Parents of Youth – Sundays at 9:15 a.m. in the Great Hall balcony.

Faith in our world today looks very different for our youth than it did for us when we were their age. This group gathers weekly to explore faith questions similar to what our middle school and high school youth are exploring in Confirmation and Sunday School class and to learn faith practices for ourselves. Our hope is to build community for the sake of our youth and for our own faith development.

Faith and Parenting – Sundays at 9:15 a.m. in Room 24.

Parents of young children gather weekly to discuss issues related to the intersection of faith and parenting and to support each other. This winter the group will continue exploring the Bible stories our children are learning in Sunday School. Please come when your schedule permits.

There will be no adult classes on January 15 so that persons can attend the 9:15 a.m. session led by Bishop Karen Oliveto.

Intentional Living: Considering Goals for the Next Chapter of My God Story

Two options: Sundays, January 22, 29, February 5 & 12, 9:15 a.m.

Mondays, January 31 and February 13, 7:00-8:45 p.m.

In the new year, join with others to consider how we might make our lives more congruent with our faith. This Faith Builders class will consider questions such as: What is the current chapter of my God story? How do I pay attention to God, and what is God saying to me? What is God calling me to? How do I move ahead to live a faith-filled and faithful life? And how have Christians answered these questions over the past 2,000 years?

Led by Jane Cheema, Jennifer Christensen, Margaret Ann Crain, Anne Hampson, Bonny Roth, and Mary Taylor-Johnson.

Advance registration highly recommended. Please register [here](#).



The Gospel According to St. Matthew: A Salvation Story in Three Acts

Sundays, Jan. 22, 29, Feb. 5 & 12, 9:15 a.m. in Glenna Hall.

Dennis Damon Moore leads a close reading of Matthew, the lectionary gospel for the new liturgical year. Jesus, we will see, is on the run in this Gospel. He is also thorough and pointed in his message throughout. The Sermon on the Mount is famous for its iteration of the Beatitudes, and Jesus goes on to make one point after another about the nature of faith and the importance of nurturing it. As in other Gospel accounts, his disciples don't get the picture, but Jesus chose them, and they will carry the word after the earthly life of the Master. Participants will follow the disciples' journey and see why the Twelve were often behind in understanding—and why it is important that we try to understand the Messiah and his message.

Other January Opportunities:

Disciple Bible Study: John – *Wednesdays, 10:00-11:30 a.m., January 18-March 29.*

As a group we will discuss and explore the meaning of John's gospel for our lives. Daily readings prepare us for the weekly gatherings, and our study will be enriched by contemporary scholarship and our group interaction. Led by Margaret Ann Crain and Sharon Rader. For materials and registration, click [here](#).

Group Discussion on *When Helping Hurts*

Thursdays, 7:00-8:30 p.m., January 19, 26, February 2 & 9, room TBA.

A group conversation based on the book described by Goodreads as “a must read for *anyone* who works with the poor or in missions.” Led by Jane Cheema, Melissa Appelt, and John Kerastas of the Mission and Outreach Committee. Please register [here](#). Copies of the participant book will be available in the office in early January, or you can opt for an e-version of the book.

Progressive Theology Reading Group – *Thursdays at noon in Glenna Hall; resumes on January 5.*

Persons interested in recent perspectives on the Christian faith gather weekly to discuss a book the group has chosen – usually one or two chapters per week. Readings are rich, but the group is not intended for scholarly discussion; participants share their personal viewpoints and insights on what the reading means for their daily lives. The next book pick for this group is *The Givenness of Things: Essays* by Marilynne Robinson, and discussion will begin January 5. While they last, copies are available in the church office for \$15; reserve a copy [here](#). Conversation led by Dean Francis, Dennis Moore, Blaine Rader, and Jack Seymour. Contact dean@faithatfirst.com for more information.

God's Stories, Our Story – *Thursdays, 7:00-8:30 p.m. in Glenna Hall.*

This Bible study group meets weekly to discuss and reflect on the Gospel text for the upcoming Sunday and also texts from the narrative lectionary, a cycle of scripture readings that focus on the major stories of the Bible, particularly in the Old Testament. Each week participants read the passages in advance and share reflections and insights. Anyone looking for a way to participate in worship more deeply and intentionally will find this group a great way to prepare. Led by Bill Brown. Registration is helpful; click [here](#).

Grace Circle – *Two Mondays each month, 7:00-8:30 p.m.* This group, new last September and facilitated by Jane Currie and Mary Taylor-Johnson, has two spots open beginning in January. The group shares God moments, reflects together on some reading, and prays together. Our winter book selection is Anne Lamott's *Small Victories: Spotting Improbable Moments of Grace*. If interested, please contact Mary Taylor-Johnson at 847-864-6181 x16 or mary@faithatfirst.com.