



The Quick Fix
June 8, 2022
Rachel Yates

This month we transitioned to a new mark of vitality. Ministries that demonstrate the mark of Lifelong Discipleship tend to be more vital than those in which discipleship is limited to children's Sunday School hour or youth confirmation classes. From our first introduction to Christianity to our last breath, we have the opportunity to deepen our faith formation and exercise active discipleship.

Stephanie Fritz, Mission Coordinator for Christian Formation in the Presbyterian Mission Agency, offered her insights at our May Presbytery Gathering. She and Ann Gibbs, our Presbytery Associate for Ministry Vitality, then took this topic further by recording a rich, funny conversation, which is now available to you on our [Lifelong Discipleship resource page](#). In it, they discuss candidly the changes to how we engage in faith formation, comparing approaches and methods used today with how we might have been taught ourselves.

"Information," Fritz stressed, "doesn't necessarily translate into lifelong discipleship." We can give out lots and lots of information, which is good for learning, but that won't – without more – make us active disciples. Gibbs jokingly asked Fritz for the solution to our discipleship dilemma, the quick fix for our Christian education programs. Fritz initially declined to offer a fix, but then she changed her mind and shared the key to quality faith formation and lifelong discipleship.

HINT: It's one of the Presbytery's three identified core values.

HINT HINT: If you don't know our three core values, you're missing out, but I bet you can find them on the website.

If you still don't know, you'll just have to [watch the conversation](#) for yourself. I heartily recommend it for everyone!

In this season of Pentecost, we are again reminded that fruitful, lifelong, and faithful discipleship does not come out of an individual acting in isolation, but it emerges from the acts of the faith community together. We should be both teachers and learners for one another. Just as we continue to grow in our faith formation, we are expected to nurture others on the same journey.

Those are baptismal promises we make to others, even when they might be too young to understand. They are promise we make to the baptized person for a lifetime, not simply until confirmation. "The congregation as a whole, on behalf of the universal Church, is responsible for nurturing baptized persons in Christian life." (Book of Order 2019-21, W-3.0403).

And then, what a comfort to discover that even as we age, others in the church are still fulfilling those baptismal promises made to us. "**No one** come to Baptism alone; we are encouraged by family or friends and surrounded by the community of faith." (Book of Order 2019-21, W-3.0404) (emphasis mine). As we celebrate again the birthday of the Church through the Holy Spirit, may we rejoice in the gift of community which nurtures and sustains us in our Christian life.