

SURFACE TO SOUL

Live Well | Lead Well | Coach Well

Forming Faith By Celebrating Milestones

AN INTRODUCTION TO MILESTONES MINISTRY

Milestones are one of many pathways our congregation provides to help people form faith. Milestones are meaningful, memorable moments marked with the Cross of Christ. They are opportunities to recognize the sacred moments and holy ground in our lives, providing opportunities to reflect on what God is up to in our lives, and to consider next steps in our faith journey. Milestones Ministry brings an awareness of the presence of God to people of all generations through a vital partnership between home and congregation.

THE FIVE COMPONENTS OF A MILESTONE CELEBRATION

1 | **Name it:** We provide a title to describe a milestone being celebrated such as baptism, first entering middle school, or retirement.

2 | **Equip it:** Equipping brings the generations together, builds community, invites conversation, encourages storytelling, and provides information. Opportunities are provided here to model faith practices for the home. Every Milestones Ministry Module offers detailed information for organizing and carrying out a successful cross-generational event.

3 | **Bless it:** Blessing the individual, and marking significant occasions in a worship service or in the home, declares God's presence in meaningful ways. God is present in all of daily life, making the ordinary sacred, something that each Milestones Ministry Module recognizes.

4 | **Gift it:** Gifting is a tangible, visible item that serves as a reminder or symbol of the occasion being marked, as well as a resource for the ongoing nurture of faith in daily life. Gifting has the potential to engage the talents and skills of many people in contributing to the milestone event and connecting people to one another in new, meaningful relationships as well.

5 | **Reinforce it:** The reinforcing process reminds participants that the celebration is more than a one-time occurrence. Reinforcement activities often include follow up support groups, online training, watching a DVD, Skype sessions, webinars, and more.

These five elements – Naming, Equipping, Blessing, Gifting, and Reinforcing - can be incorporated into a milestone whether it is a birth, a baptism, a new puppy, a graduation, a wedding, joining an AA group, a retirement, a funeral, or any occasion.

Milestones celebrations are faith forming activities that involve parents, caregivers, and other caring adults during specific stages in life. Listed below are milestones frequently celebrated at home and in the congregation.

HOME-BASED MILESTONES

Birthday Celebration
Anniversary Celebration
High School/Post-High Graduation
Home Blessing
Driver's License
Retirement

CONGREGATION-BASED MILESTONES

Baptism/Anniversary of Baptism
Welcome to Worship
First Communion & First Bible
Confirmation and Graduation
Completion of a Training Certificate
Wedding & 20th Anniversary



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