

**Encounter Two:
Sharing Faith Stories and Their Relevance to our Lives**

The purpose of this Encounter is to reflect on memories of the faith milestones in our lives, and to think about how they have impacted and shaped our lives. What connections are there between faith and daily living?

1. Begin by sharing any “highs” and “lows” since your last meeting together.
2. Read **2 Corinthians 11:24-33** together. In these verses, Paul tells about some of the hardships he faced as he worked to share the good news of Jesus with others.
The story of his conversion to faith and mission is in Acts 9, and a story of standing up for the true faith in **Galatians 1 & 2**, especially **2:11-21**. What catches your attention as you read this text?
Our faith stories might not be as dramatic as Paul’s, but we still may have an interesting and helpful story to tell others as we seek to understand the Gospel, and encourage each other in faith.
3. Use the following questions to think about your faith stories and share them with each other. As you answer the questions, think about how your experiences have played a role in shaping your faith.
 - a. What are some of your earliest memories of becoming aware of God? How did you picture and think about and feel about God? Ask the same question about Jesus. How did Jesus fit in to your understanding of God?
 - b. Who were the people who first told you about God? What additional influence have they had on your life and values and future plans?
 - c. What stories have you heard about your birth, baptism, or beginning Sunday School? Where did these things occur? Do you have baptismal sponsors? In what ways have they continued to nurture your faith?
 - d. Describe how worship services, Confirmation classes, Bible camp, service projects, and other activities have influenced and shaped your faith through the years.
 - e. When do you feel that God is close to you? Are there times when God seems far away? What kind of situation might cause that feeling to happen? Are there obstacles in the way of feeling that God is close to you?
 - f. What is your favorite time of the church year? Why?
 - g. Do you have a favorite hymn or song? Why is it such a favorite?
 - h. Do you have favorite Bible verses? Which ones? Why? (Remember that confirmation students will be asked to select three Bible verses to memorize before the date of confirmation.)
 - i. What is there about God or about your faith that you have questions about right now, or are struggling to understand, or have doubts about?
4. **The student should add details from this Encounter to his/her notes of things to be included in the Faith Story she/he will write.** Not all needs to be included in the paper, but the decision about what to include should be made later. More notes now are better than fewer!
5. The student should be reminded about their need to know the Ten Commandments, the Lord’s Prayer, the Apostles’ Creed, and three scripture verses. You might want to review these core pieces of our faith, and to begin the selection of the **3** Bible verses during your conversations.
6. Make plans to greet each other in worship!

Close your Encounter with prayer. Decide who will begin the prayer and who will conclude. You might want to name people and thank God for those who have told you about Jesus and who have helped your faith grow. Ask God to send others into your life so that your faith may continue to grow deeper and stronger.