



May 2009

Dear Pastors and Elders:

Synod 1995 encouraged Faith Alive Christian Resources (then CRC Publications) to produce materials that would help congregations implement its decisions concerning the participation of children at the Lord's table. In 1996, as its response to Synod's request, Faith Alive published materials intended to help congregations encourage and prepare children to profess their faith.

The purpose of encouraging and preparing is not to cram years of church education into a few brief sessions. Synod specified that it be carried out "at the cognitive level appropriate to the child," and that it should "focus on the nature and meaning of the sacrament and on a basic explication of the Apostles' Creed, Ten Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer" (*Acts of Synod 1995*, p. 720).

An excellent tool for helping children prepare to profess their faith is the booklet *Q&A: A Summary of Biblical Teachings* (available from Faith Alive Resources). This booklet, written for children, uses questions and answers to present an overview of our faith and to specifically focus on the areas stipulated by synod. Also available from Faith Alive is the study *I Believe: Getting Ready to Profess My Faith*, a guide to help mentors prepare young teens to grow in and express their faith.

Learning to speak of one's faith in one's own words is an important aspect of a child's preparation for public profession and communion. That's why we've included in these materials a child's profession of faith keepsake (*I Love You, Lord*). This (downloadable) memento prompts the child to write simple statements expressing what his or her baptism means, who Jesus is, and what the Lord's Supper is about.

In addition to the child's keepsake, we've included a helpful booklet for the child's parent(s) entitled *Nurturing Your Child's Faith: Leading Your Child to the Lord's Table*, and a guide for pastors and elders. The booklet for parents sensitizes them to their responsibilities in leading their children to the Lord's table and provides a specific guide to the steps involved in doing so. The booklet for pastors and elders not only summarizes synodical decisions, but also offers practical tips on how to make a real difference in the spiritual lives of the children in your congregation. (Note that the materials we offer you online can also be purchased as a kit from Faith Alive Resources.)

With you, we're excited by this opportunity to enrich the lives of our young ones. Guiding covenant children to participate at the Lord's table by this process affords you as leaders rich new possibilities to contribute to their spiritual nurture and growth. Of course, no program or material will bear much fruit without your loving, personal shepherding; but it is our prayer that synod's decisions and the support materials we offer here will serve you well in fulfilling this challenging task. May God bless you richly in your respective ministries, and grant you much joy in nurturing Jesus' lambs in the ways of God's Kingdom.

In Christ,
Faith Alive staff
Faith Formation Committee

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