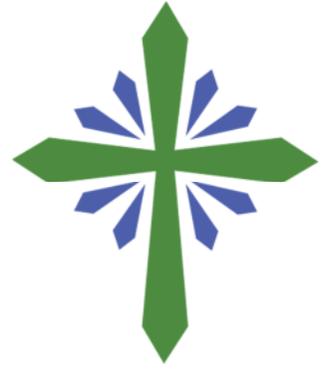


## Confirmation Mentors

Each confirmation student chooses an adult member of KUC to be their mentor. Mentors cannot be family members.

The idea behind this program is that the mentor will help to support the student as they go through Confirmation and can help the student to feel more connected to KUC through an independent adult relationship. As someone who is outside of family, mentors are able to offer a different perspective than what students hear from parents and relatives. The hope is that this will be a mutually rewarding experience and they will grow together in faith through conversations and time spent with one another.



We ask that students meet with their mentors AT LEAST 3 times over the course of the Confirmation program and submit the Mentor Meeting Form on the back of this sheet as proof of the meetings. Though sometimes a mentor will contact the student, it is ultimately the student's responsibility to contact the mentor and arrange the meetings.

These are the three kinds of meetings each confirmation student should have with their mentor. There will be two student-mentor pizza dinners scheduled that can count as one of your "Free Choice" activities.

- **Food or drink** – the very first Christians showed us that church members shared meals with one another. If you don't know your mentor well, this is a great place to start. Go for coffee, froyo, ice cream, breakfast or dinner.
- **Church Activity**– It can be attending worship, a fellowship activity, or volunteering together at Kenilworth Union Church. This mentor meeting can count as your service requirement, too, if you choose to do something together. You do need to work together, though, and not simply attend at the same time.
- **Free Choice** – choose something you both would like to do together. Try to choose something that will be spiritually nourishing.

When first getting to know each other, here are a few questions you can ask each other to break the ice:

- How long have you lived on the North Shore? Where did you grow up?
- Did you go to church growing up? What was it like?
- Did you grow up with sisters and brothers? Pets?
- If you could be a teenager again, would you want to?
- What was the hardest thing you faced when you were my age and how did you get through it?
- How is faith part of your life today? When is a time when faith became an unexpected comfort or hope?
- What is your favorite sport? Movie? Book? Activity? Vacation spot?

# On Mentoring

*by a lifelong mentor, Rev. Brian Shivers*

“Mentor” can be a frightening word and an even more frightening concept. There are many people who believe that they are not properly equipped to mentor anyone, let alone a young person. Often they feel as though there is some incredible amount of information they need to learn, some specific skill set they need to develop, or some perfect combination of personality traits they need to possess before they can consider mentoring. Because of this, many people steer clear of such opportunities, and everyone loses as a result; the students as well as the potential mentors.

The truth is that you already serve as a mentor to the young people with whom you come into contact. Consider the young people who are in your life on a regular basis: your children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, neighbors, church members, etc. These are the young people for whom you already serve as a mentor. You are already giving them your time and investing of yourself simply by your willingness to be with them. These young people pay attention to your words, your deeds, and your faith. They watch how you navigate your way through life. You are an example to them. Successful mentoring brings intentionality into that which is already happening organically throughout your life.

At its most basic, mentoring is walking alongside students through life. This means being present ‘with’ them. That may seem simplistic, but it is true. Young people need committed and caring older adults in their lives as they try to successfully navigate the sometimes murky waters of pre-adolescence, adolescence, and young adulthood.

## A Legacy of Mentoring

In Deuteronomy, we have one of the most concise and poignant statements about the value of walking alongside one another as we grow and develop. It reads,

"Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates" (Deuteronomy 6:4-9, NRSV).

This is mentoring at its best—life and faith shared “along the way.” The Indiana Youth Institute website says, “Mentors simply need to be willing to help a young person by being a consistent, caring adult.” Mentoring is about walking through life on a consistent basis with someone. That is what young people need; this is also what young people want. You already possess the necessary gifts and talents to step into this role.

## A mentor is...

- **Willing.** A mentor possesses a willingness to walk alongside others as they journey through life no matter what they may face.
- **Available.** A mentor is available both as a resource as well as a source of encouragement. Availability is not simply a time commitment. It also involves being present and open when with a mentee.
- **Reliable.** A mentor is a constant and consistent presence. Being there when a mentor says they will be and following through on the commitments made are necessary pieces of a successful mentoring relationship.
- **Authentic.** A mentor is willing to be themselves. The one thing that cannot be replicated in a mentoring relationship is you. Relax and be yourself.

### What Young People Want

*The following was written by a 16-year-old and published in The Spirit of Mentoring: A Manual for Adult Volunteers (Robin Cox, 2005).*

**Responsibility:** Give us a chance to prove to you that we can be responsible.

**Respect:** Treat us like you'd like to be treated.

**Trust:** Don't judge us just because we are teenagers...Not all of us are bad.

**A Chance:** To make mistakes, learn from experience, and to explain our opinion or our side of the story.

**Care:** Let us know you care.

**Support:** We need support; we need to be reassured we are doing the right thing.

**Understanding:** Listen to what we have to say and understand that we have stresses and problems too. Although they may seem insignificant to you, they are big to us. Being a teenager is not easy.

**Balance:** Don't leave us totally alone. We need you to catch us if we fall.

**Praise:** When we do things that are good or make the right decisions.

**Freedom:** It may be hard but let us go. We have to leave our own footprints and make our own decisions and mistakes. Part of growing up is finding out who we are, what we value and what we need as a person.

### What young people need

Young people have certain developmental needs that can be addressed in a mentoring relationship.

**Acceptance:** They need someone to accept them as a part of the group just because they are present. The mentoring relationship should be a place where the young person is appreciated because they are present.

**Challenge:** It is important for young people to feel challenged to give input, to do meaningful work (more than just stacking some chairs and moving tables), and to understand what is going on.

**Support:** Young people will need to have the necessary supports in place to complete an assigned task. Most of the time this means access to someone who is willing to help them understand the reason certain things need to be done and give them a clear description of expectations.

**Encouragement:** Often young people only hear negative comments and not genuine complements. Give the young people with whom you work praise for their work, their willingness to try new things, and who they are.

**Safe Place:** The physical and emotional space created must be one in which the young person feels safe enough to be themselves and feels as though their thoughts and ideas are valued.

**Honesty:** Young people need mentors in their lives who are willing to be honest about expectations, responsibilities, and performance.

**Trust:** It is critical that young people feel as though they are a trusted and valued part of the team. If they are trusted, they will give trust in return.

**Example:** Young people need adults in their lives who can be honest and real examples of what it means to be a genuine person of faith.