

My faith has always been very important to me. I was raised in a Lutheran church, and from the time I was young my parents instilled the importance of attending church regularly and being an active member of the church community.

As I grew older, I began to take more ownership of my own faith. I attended several mission trips with my youth group. The first mission trip was to Pikeville, Tennessee, where we painted a house and built a porch for a family in need. We also provided the family with many necessities and comforts that they could not afford. Working with my youth group to truly help a family who needed it was an extremely eye opening experience. Our mission trip to North Carolina was similar to this one. We painted a house and did yard work for families in need.

I also attended an ELCA youth conference in New Orleans. Each night we were there, we worshipped with thousands of other Lutheran youth in a huge stadium. Getting the chance to worship with so many Lutherans your age is a once in a lifetime opportunity that really helped to solidify my faith.

It was also through my faith that I found my desire to be an educator. During high school, the 4th grade Sunday school teacher had to

leave due to medical reasons and I was asked to fill in. It was through this experience that God helped me discover my passion for teaching.

Now that I have graduated college and begun a new phase of my life, I am incorporating faith into my life in many new ways. I play guitar and sing during some church services and I have recently become a member of the Youth Committee. I am excited to be working with a group that will help the youth of our church grow in their own faith, just as I did.