

# UNIVERSITY HANDBOOK

Confirmation Ministry of Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Sun Prairie, Wisconsin - 2011-2012

## First things first...why confirmation?!?

We're glad you are seeking out information about Solid Rock University Confirmation at Our Savior's! **But why confirmation???**

We believe confirmation is a great time to learn and grow as a follower of Jesus. We do this because it matters to God. God wants to be in a relationship with us. God wants us to grow in love toward God, and also toward our neighbor. God wants us to follow him, to listen to God's word, to pray and serve, and to hang out together. So it's all about growing as a disciple. **And it matters to God!**



Making disciples is pretty cool stuff. It can be fun. It can be exciting. It may not always be easy, but it will definitely be rewarding. Frankly, we are all in this together. We will all learn together. AND if we put out hearts and minds into it, amazing things can happen....**because God is at work!**

In order for this learning process to succeed and thrive, we have some high expectations for you and this Solid Rock Confirmation ministry.

As a student

- that you study, worship and pray
- that you become involved
- that you grow in your faith

As a parent or guardian

- that you be an example of Christian behavior and commitment to your son or daughter
- that you will worship and pray regularly
- that you will encourage your child in their walk in faith
- that you will work "with " us by allowing your own faith and commitment to Christ to grow and not work "against" us by undermining our goals of Christian growth for your son or daughter or by not being faithful in your own attendance at worship and in prayer

As the congregation of Our Savior's

- that we will be creative
- that we will challenge and feed your faith
- that we will give you as both parent and student some tools that you can use to help your faith speak to the needs and demands of the crazy world in which we live

# REQUIREMENTS

When you enroll in Solid Rock University, you are taking on a course of study that will take three years to complete. You usually begin as a teen in grades seven through nine. This university divides the learning opportunities into courses, retreats, and other expectations that earn “credits.” Here’s what to expect if you want to affirm your faith at the end of the three years.

The requirements are as follows:

**18 Class Credits** You will need to complete 18 credits of class work. This includes required courses like Bible courses (Old and New Testament courses) and Lutheran theology and identity courses (such as 10 Commandments, Apostles’ Creed, Lord’s Prayer, Means of Grace, Martin Luther, and Preaching the Word). You will be able to choose your elective courses from a variety of classes that might interest you. See the list of all classes at the end of this packet. Year 1 students are required to complete several core courses before they can take electives.

You will earn a credit when you successfully complete one three or four-week course or unit. Courses are offered each month from September through May (except December). You will register for classes at the beginning of the year during their registration appointment. Parents play a key role in your success and parents must attend the initial appointment.

Classes are held on Wednesday evenings from 6:30 – 8 p.m. “No School Specials” are courses that are held at other times when students are out of school, etc. “No School Specials” offer great flexibility if you can’t attend all the Wednesday classes because of a conflict with your family schedule. It’s really important that you bring your family calendar with you to your initial appointment.

You must come prepared to learn. That means you have to bring to class each week:

- completed assignments
- your CEV Bible
- your Solid Rock U binder
- a notebook and pencil
- Luther’s Small Catechism Pocket Edition

**NO ABSENCES!** Yes, you are expected to attend every class session of the unit and complete the assignments, homework and/or tests in order to receive credit. Some courses may require more time, especially if travel is involved. *Read how one family managed to make attendance a priority even when there were other pressures from sports and family commitments (see page 4).*

In case of an absence due to illness, instructors will assign make-up work. However, some courses require 100% attendance to receive credit. In order to receive credit for a course when make-up work is given, you must turn it in to Pastor Krahn **within two weeks** of the end of the unit.

# SRU LEARNING COMPONENTS

**Worship Notes** For us at Solid Rock U, worship is key! We all need to be fed during worship and we need to pray and praise God as well. An active worship life is what we are hoping to foster. Worship notes help build a bridge to your church, especially what is happening in the sermon and liturgy.

*You will need to complete 20 worship notes each year in Years 1 and 2, and 15 worship notes in Year 3. Notes must be taken at a worship service where you actually show up and participate (i.e. not from television, or being in the nursery, or teaching Sunday School...even though that is good, too).*

If you get to worship in another congregation, you should take some notes and return them with a copy of the bulletin from the church you visited.

The **Worship Note Forms** are located in the mailboxes by the SRU Bulletin Board by the elevator. Completed forms get turned in there, too.

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**Family Credits** Two family credits are required each year. Family credits are opportunities to learn about God's activity in the world and serve together with your family. It's about being the hands and feet of God or living out your faith. Being a disciple!

Because faith formation begins in the home, one way Solid Rock U can empower parents for sharing the faith is through family credits. Part of the congregation's responsibility is to help parents teach the faith so we have created opportunities like family credits, adult learning opportunities, and other events to do just that.

Numerous ideas or types of family credits follow. It's okay to be creative and serve in ways that suit your family's makeup and might also stretch your faith. It is best to complete one credit within the community and one in or around Our Savior's to get the most benefit from different ways of serving.

Credit will be given after a **Family Credit Reporting Form** has been completed and turned in to Pastor Krahn. That form is attached as well or you can find it next to the SRU Bulletin Board.

# SRU LEARNING COMPONENTS

**Memory Work** During your first year at Solid Rock U, you will be required to show you have memorized (with a written test) the following:

The Books of the Old Testament – October 5, 2011 at 6 p.m.

The Books of the New Testament – November 2, 2011 at 6 p.m.

The Lord's Prayer – January 4, 2012 at 6 p.m.

The Apostles' Creed – February 1, 2012 at 6 p.m.

The 10 Commandments (in order) – February 29, 2012 at 6 p.m.

Additional memory work from Luther's Small Catechism may be assigned as homework for some core classes. Memory work can be found at the Solid Rock University link on our website, [www.oslc-elca.org](http://www.oslc-elca.org), in Luther's Small Catechism pocket edition, as well as in the Solid Rock U binder.

The memory work results will be posted on the SRU Bulletin Board next to the last four digits of the students SSN or a PIN of your choosing that you can remember.

If you miss a memory work session or you don't pass the memory work test, it is your responsibility to make up that memory work. You will need to contact Pastor Krahn of Brett Christensen for an appropriate time to retake the memory work test.

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**Weekend Retreats** We believe camping ministry plays a vital role in your faith formation. For this reason we require you to have one camping experience during 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grades. This year's scheduled retreats options are:

October 21-23, 2011 at Pine Lake Camp

November 18-20, 2011 at Imago Dei Village

If you liked the weekend camp experience and would like more, we offer confirmation camp the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of June. You can earn two credits (one time only) when you spend the week at camp with Brett. This also fulfills your camping requirement.

We understand that camping ministry requires additional costs. Financial hardship should never be a reason for not going to camp. See Brett if you need assistance.

## SRU Learning Components

**Acolyting** You will begin serving as an acolyte at the end of Year 2. Throughout Year 3, students are scheduled to participate in this portion of worship leadership. A schedule is online at [www.oslc-elca.org](http://www.oslc-elca.org).

Acolytes do not need to take notes on the sermon, but you need to complete the form with your highs and lows in order to receive credit.

**Preaching** The preaching course, "Preaching the Word," comes at the end of Year 3. It is a required course and preaching a short sermon for the congregation during worship is part of that course.

The Affirmation of Baptism service is traditionally scheduled for the last Sunday in April, and students normally preach the Saturday or Sunday before. The class helps you prepare your sermon and includes Bible study, and help with outlining, writing, and delivery of your sermon.



## ONE SRU PARENT HAS THIS TO SAY...

*“But the Lord answered her, ‘Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her.’” (Luke 10:41-42)*

When Pastor B. read this gospel lesson yesterday, I quickly thought about the paragraph that Pastor Krahn had asked us to write. Like many other families, we are pulled in many different directions and “distracted by many things.” With hockey, baseball, musicals, etc., how do we manage to get to worship most Sabbaths? Jon will jokingly tell you when he was young, he had a “drug” problem. It is NOT what you are thinking: rather his parents “drug” him to worship, to Sunday School, to confirmation and, to be quite honest, I had a “drug” problem too! Our parents (and when I was at college, my grandparents, great-aunts and my aunt and uncle) modeled making our faith development and worship a priority. Here are some suggestions to help make getting to worship easier:

**SET AN EXAMPLE!** First and foremost, parents need to make worship and faith development a priority. When our children were baptized, we promised to do that! Each Sunday that we have a baptism at OSLC, we, as the assembly, promise to support parents and nurture children as they grow in faith. The only way that can happen is if parents and children come to worship.

**GET INVOLVED!** It is much easier to get to worship if you have people counting on you to be there. Sign up to be an usher, a greeter, a lector, a communion assistant, a sound board operator, a Sherpa, a workshop leader, sing in choir, ring a bell, serve coffee, attend a bible study. We’ve found that if you find yourself saying, “I just don’t feel like going today. I just want to sleep in!” if you have someone expecting you to be there, you will be more likely to get there!

**MAKE WORSHIP THE PRIORITY!** If activities conflict with worship, make worship the priority. If a game is scheduled at 11am on Sunday morning, you have time to get to worship at 8am or you can even go Saturday evening. If you have an early game on Sunday, worship Saturday or at 10:30am on Sunday. It’s all about priorities! If a practice was scheduled during a confirmation class on Wednesday evenings, we let the coach know right away of the conflict and that we’d get to as much of the practice as possible. Aaron may have had to leave practice early or get there a few minutes late, but we made sure that the coaches knew that this was a priority for us and that as long as we made good-faith attempts to get Aaron to practice and he worked 100% while he was there, they were flexible with us.

**STAY ON TRACK!** When we asked Aaron what helped him the most, he said, “Stay on track.” January and February are busy months for hockey and October and April are busy for baseball. There was one particular January session when he knew that it would be difficult to get to both confirmation and practices, so he took a session off. He was able to do this because he had kept up with his classes, his memory work and his worship notes. He took advantage of a couple of “No School Specials.” He got ahead, so he could take some time off, if he needed it.

**KEEP GOING!** Now that our boys are older and have affirmed their faith, it doesn’t mean that we are “done!” Getting them to worship is still a priority for us. Our incentive is that whoever goes to worship, goes out for a meal after. This is great because it gives us a chance to chat with the boys where we are not distracted by the computer or the television. Pick something that works for your family.

We hope that these suggestions will be helpful as you try to take Mary’s lead and “choose the better part” when we can sit at the Lord feet and listen to what He is saying.

Angie Schmidt



# SRU Covenant

## We make promises! We keep our word!

A Covenant is a promise that makes clear everyone's responsibilities and expectations. Everyone on the team, whether a student, parent, teacher or pastor, needs to keep their end of the bargain for things to go well and so we make a promise. We sign our names.

### **SRU Student:**

As confirmation students, I promise to put my faith into action by:

- \_\_\_\_\_ attending SRU every Wednesday I have class with my brain alert and focused
- \_\_\_\_\_ worshipping at least 20 times during Years 1 and 2, and at least 15 in Year 3
- \_\_\_\_\_ fulfilling my memory work requirements
- \_\_\_\_\_ participating in at least one weekend retreat
- \_\_\_\_\_ doing at least 2 family activities for family credit per year
- \_\_\_\_\_ assisting at worship by acolyting (end of Year 2 and Year 3)
- \_\_\_\_\_ preaching a sermon (Year 3 only)

### **Parents:**

As parent(s), I promise to put my faith into action by:

- \_\_\_\_\_ modeling the Christian faith and life for your child
- \_\_\_\_\_ regularly worshipping and praying
- \_\_\_\_\_ encouraging my child in their walk of faith
- \_\_\_\_\_ working "with" and not "against" the goals of SRU

### **SRU Staff:**

As members of the SRU staff, we promise to:

- \_\_\_\_\_ be creative in our teaching
- \_\_\_\_\_ challenge and feed your faith
- \_\_\_\_\_ give you tools so that you can better interpret your faith and how God is at work

I understand and promise to fulfill the obligations listed above:

SRU Student \_\_\_\_\_

SRU Parent \_\_\_\_\_

SRU Staff \_\_\_\_\_



## 2011-12 SRU SCHEDULE

### Wednesday nights are devoted to SRU!

#### The Details...

October 5	Year 1 Memory work test on Books of the Old Testament	6:00
October 5,12,19	Unit 1	6:30-8 p.m.
October 26	No classes tonight	
November 2	Year 1 Memory work test on Books of the New Testament	6:00
November 2,9,30	Unit 2	6:30-8
November 16	Confirmation Extravaganza for Year 2 Students only	5-9
November 23	Ecumenical Thanksgiving Worship, <i>Location TBD</i>	6:30
January 4	Year 1 Memory work test on The Lord's Prayer	6:00
January 4,11,25	Unit 3	6:30-8
January 18	No class tonight (exam week)	
January 20	No School Special, Meet Madam LeTourneau	9-2
February 1	Year 1 Memory work test on The Apostles' Creed	6:00
February 1,8,15	Unit 4	6:30-8
February 22	Ash Wednesday Worship	noon, 6:30
February 27	No School Special, Mission of the ELCA	9-2
February 29	Year 1 Memory work test on The Ten Commandments	6:00
February 29—	"Lenten Special" - SRU Unit 5	7:15-8:30
March 7,14,21,28	Each Wednesday during Lent:	Soup supper Worship Class time
		5-6:15 6:30-7:00 7:15-8:30
April 4	No classes tonight	
April 5	Maundy Thursday worship	noon, 6:30
April 6	Good Friday worship	noon, 6:30
April 8	Easter! Alleluia!	
April 11,18,25,May 2	Unit 6	6:30-8
April 21-22	Year 3 students preach	5:30, 8, 10:30
April 28	Confirmation breakfast/rehearsal for Year 3 students	8-10 a.m.
April 29	Affirmation of Baptism/Confirmation Worship	noon
May 9,16,23	Unit 7	6:30-8

"Train children in the right way, and when old, they will not stray. (Proverbs 22:6)



## SRU FAMILY CREDIT IDEAS

### Family Credits...Passing on Faith

It's a fact: God is active in the world. It's also a fact that God is active in your family and in your life...whether you "see" that happening or not so much. Every day, God is busy. And we all want to be part of the action. It's what we do as baptized children of God.

That's good because God calls us into action! But of course, everyone is unique. Every family looks different. Everyone in your family has special talents, gifts and assets. God wants parents to teach/share/embodiment the faith for their kids. So, a "family credit" is a simple way for you as a family to be active together and then talk about how God was present in your time together.

#### Stuff to do around OSLC (Pick ONE)

- ◇ Attend soup suppers during Lent.
- ◇ Serve on a board or team together.
- ◇ Volunteer as a "First Time Visitor" with your family, delivering welcome packets to those who have worshipped with us.
- ◇ Teach a Sunday School rotation workshop as a family.
- ◇ Take advantage of the Youth and Family Retreat and get away (adults only).
- ◇ Volunteer at the Trunk-or-Treat event.
- ◇ Teach Vacation Bible School together.
- ◇ Work the Confirmation Breakfast.
- ◇ Usher together, family style.
- ◇ Bring your family to an OSLC work day and work.
- ◇ Help with Rally Day.
- ◇ Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- ◇ Sit in on a student confirmation course elective.
- ◇ Be an "decorator" to beautify the church for Advent or be an "undecorator" and help take down the Christmas decorations.
- ◇ Chaperone at youth group events.
- ◇ Get on the altar guild schedule with your family.
- ◇ Do the "Faith 5" together (see attached)
- ◇ Read one of Book of the Month selections with your family...any version of the Bible will do.
- ◇ Come to an OSLC workday with the family
- ◇ Get up early and help at the Easter breakfast.
- ◇ Make pizzas with the youth.
- ◇ Get on the Nursery schedule and volunteer.

#### Stuff in the Community (Pick ONE)

- ◇ Serve at the Sunshine Supper.
- ◇ Serve as greeters with your family.
- ◇ Go family camping. Check out the area Lutheran Bible Camps at [crosswayscamps.org](http://crosswayscamps.org); [lutherdale.org](http://lutherdale.org); or [sugarcreekbiblecamp.org](http://sugarcreekbiblecamp.org)
- ◇ Volunteer at Holy Wisdom Monastery or the Token Creek Watershed. Make sure you call first.
- ◇ Raise money and awareness about cancer by walking on the Relay 4 Life team.
- ◇ Walk the CROP Walk in October.
- ◇ Make it a priority: do Random Acts of Kindness as a family and talk about it
- ◇ Volunteer at Oakwood, the Colonial Club, the community gardens (Call first)
- ◇ Get your family to ring them bells for the Salvation Army
- ◇ Attend the Park Crawl with your family
- ◇ Go to a School Board meeting and see where God is at work
- ◇ Family day at a Prayer Labyrinth (Faith, Columbus; New Life, Cottage Grove; or Advent, Madison all have labyrinths for you to use)
- ◇ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

# SRU FAMILY CREDIT REPORTING FORM 2011-12

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Family Members who participated: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Service: *(circle one)*      Within Our Savior's      In the Community

What did you do together? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What made God smile through this activity? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What things do you wish were different? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Did you make a difference? How? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Would you do this activity again? *(circle one)*      Yes      No

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent(s) Signature \_\_\_\_\_

# SRU COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

## Bible Course Offerings

### **Old Testament 1 / Old Testament 2\***

This six week course gives a quick overview of our faith history from Abraham to Jesus. You'll see how there are many different types of writing that make up the 39 books of the Old Testament including history, saga, poetry, wisdom, and prophecy.

### **New Testament 1\***

In New Testament 1, you will see how the 27 books of the New Testament are a witness to Jesus Christ. In this overview course, you'll see what makes up the New Testament writings and how those words tell what it means to believe that Jesus Christ is Lord.

### **New Testament 2\***

This course will use the Gospels to walk with Jesus from birth and baptism through his resurrection. Parables, miracles, teachings, and love for all people were the attributes of Jesus that tell us of God's almighty love and complete forgiveness.

### **Grace Talk (New Testament 3)\***

In this course we will look at themes from the New Testament and discuss how they relate to our lives as individuals and people in community. We'll let the Gospel message come alive as we discuss themes of faith, love, mission, prayer, forgiveness, hope, community, and especially grace and the work of the Holy Spirit.

### **Women in the Bible**

Join the hunt and see the special role women play in the biblical story, from Ruth and Esther to Mary, the mother of God, to Phoebe and Priscilla. Many, many women are identified as significant actors in the Bible story.

### **The Jerusalem Times**

Do you want to create a newspaper? This course will look at a specific event and time in the life of Jesus and creatively depict that in the various journalistic styles of a newspaper.

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## Faith Foundation Course Offerings

### **The Ten Commandments\***

They're biblical. Everyone talks about them. They are the most recognized laws in the world. We have all broken every one of them a multitude of times. Luther's explanations will make them even more difficult.

### **Apostles' Creed\***

This baptismal creed is one of the first confessions of faith used by the Church. In its three parts, or articles, the creed identifies our basic understandings of God as Father, Son, and Spirit. What do Lutheran Christians believe? You'll look at Luther's explanations for the answer.

# SRU COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

## Faith Foundation Course Offerings Continued

### **The Lord's Prayer\***

This prayer, given by Jesus to the disciples, has united Christians all over the world. But what exactly are we saying in these words first delivered in Aramaic and recorded in Greek? With the help of Luther, we will find out.

### **Means of Grace (Sacraments)\***

First we are born, then we must eat. In our relationship with Jesus, we are born in Baptism and nourished with Holy Communion. Why are these the only two sacraments? What do they mean? This course will help you understand more about the Sacraments.

### **Martin Luther\***

Born into the early Renaissance of Germany, Martin Luther changed the world. It's important that we know him better and understand the forces that opened him to be such a reforming servant of God.

### **Saints and Martyrs**

Throughout the life of the church, God has raised up great leaders and servers who set examples for the rest of us. From Mother Theresa to Dietrich Bonhoefer to Philip Melancthon to those who died in the jaws of Rome's lions, they deserve to be remembered and recognized.

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## Our Journey of Faith Course Offerings

### **Architecture of God**

A building is a building is a building, right? Well, maybe not. From the very old European cathedrals to modern churches, the architecture and design of the worship space is a witness to faith. Find out more in this class and also have the opportunity to visit a variety of worship centers.

### **Cults and Gangs**

Cults and gangs bring temptations to our door, but we want to remain faithful. What are cults all about? What's the difference between a friendship group and a gang? This course will ask tough questions and provide some tough answers.

### **Dating, Relationships and Love**

We find ourselves drawn to certain people in ways we sometimes describe as chemistry or magnetism. God created us that way. While this can be a great joy it can also be a the great weakness. This course will examine the place of faith in the most basic desires of life. Open only to 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

# SRU COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

## Our Journey of Faith Course Offerings Continued

### **Death and Dying**

Birth eventually leads to death. Yet because of our rebirth in our Baptisms, it results in everlasting life through Jesus Christ. Here we will talk about what happens both physically and spiritually when we die. A tour a funeral home may be in order.

### **Dependable Strengths**

It has been said that 80% of our gifts and talents are hidden. In this course we will explore and discover those gifts God has given us.

### **Drama: Acts of Faith**

Do you like to act? In just a few weeks members of this class will prepare a simple play for presentation. Sets are minimal, but the power of drama in words and actions can reveal a whole lot of truth about Jesus.

### **Faith and Art**

Express yourself in an art form. Maybe clay, maybe painting, maybe stained glass. Learn a little about the ways art has been used to express Christian truth, and then try your hand at it.

### **Faith of Our Fathers (and Mothers, too)**

What have earlier generations thought about faith and life? Here is an opportunity to ask your parents, grandparents, and elders a few questions like "So Dad, does it make a difference to you that you are baptized?" or "Grandma, what do you think about when you take communion?"

### **It's All about Stewardship**

Stewardship is all about taking care of ourselves, our earth, our relationships, and our faith. It's about giving, recycling, avoiding waste, sharing the abundance, and saving the environment. It's all about stewardship.

### **Listen to This**

What are you listening to on your i-pod these days? What music and lyrics are blasting through those earbuds on your head? Bring along the music and lyrics (the words) and let's talk about the message.

### **Meet Madame LeTourneau**

The pipe organ is often referred to as the king of instruments. Here is your chance to learn about the insides of a great instrument and to make it sing for you. Sorry, only open to those with several years of piano lessons.

# SRU COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

## Our Journey of Faith Course Offerings Continued

### **The Mission of the ELCA**

The Church is a community, a community that crosses boundaries of cities and states. In this class you will learn about how the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America came to be and about the mission we have that spans the earth. It may include a trip to the ELCA headquarters in Chicago.

### **Prayer and Meditation**

Throughout history Christians have found ways to communicate with God in a variety of ways. We want to listen for God's voice, but we seldom do. Students will learn about centering, silence, deep breathing, and other forms of prayerful meditation.

### **Preaching the Word\***

This required class for ninth grade students offers the opportunity to express their faith by preaching during worship. Students will learn about studying the assigned lessons for the day and about making a good presentation.

### **Primetime Praise**

Primetime Praise is offered to musicians and singers that would like to learn several songs to be performed in worship. If you're thinking something along the lines of tried and true hymns, think again! These are not your grandma's hymns but ready-for-primetime praise songs that will get the congregation moving. (Maybe even clapping on beat!) We're looking for musicians who play guitar, bass, drums, or keyboards and singers who feel confident to lead or sing simple back-up harmonies.

### **Reel Faith**

In this course you will learn to identify how faith is "passed on" in characters of popular movies and then how you can apply these ideas to your life.

### **Where Jesus Walked**

This course will give you a glimpse into the land where Jesus taught, healed, ministered, and ultimately died. Through photo and story we will gain an understanding of life in Palestine yesterday and today.

### **Worship Workers**

Why do we worship? What goes on in that "secret" room behind the choir? What does it mean to come into the presence of God? Learn all of this and more in Worship Workers, a hands on class that is fun and interesting. For this course there is only one Wednesday class to attend (so that's two Wednesdays OFF) as you trade Wednesdays for a Sunday where you will set up for worship.