

# Observe Christian Education Week, **9/11/2011**

**Sunday, September 11** marks the beginning of Christian education week this year. Because this date marks the tenth anniversary of 9/11, it promises to be an emotionally charged Lord's Day.

In general, homecoming celebrations and fall launches are joyful events. Because of the 9/11 anniversary, some congregations may choose to move these fall rituals. Others will make plans to honor the memory of the fallen in respectful ways.

Congregations directly affected by the loss of church members on 9/11 will want to contact loved ones and survivors before making plans. Make a list of persons to be remembered with permission in your church.

Refresh your memory or find out more about their faith stories. You may discover that they were a beloved Sunday school teacher, confirmation mentor, or Bible study companion. Consider connecting their faith stories to those called to disciple others today.

When commissioning leaders and learners on September 11, it may be meaningful to mention those who lost their lives or were injured; remember them in relation to the congregation's ongoing ministry. Imagine in response to the question, "Will you serve with energy, imagination, and love?" a voice rising, "I will in memory or honor of Mr. Smith, faithful teacher and friend." Inform survivors of the plan to include names in the liturgy.

If you are concerned about leaving someone out or worried about being insensitive in any way, write general liturgical responses:

"We serve today because of the witness of fathers and mothers who lost their lives. We teach today in honor of teachers and volunteers who were injured. We love today in memory of innocent people of all faiths who were victimized by ignorance instead of knowledge and understanding."

Churches using the new lectionary-based curriculum, *Feasting on the Word*, will discover that the selected Scripture text for September 11 is Jesus' teaching about forgiveness, "Then Peter came and said to him, 'Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?' Jesus said to him, 'Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times,'" (Matthew 18:21-22). The sessions for this Sunday can provide important opportunities for difficult conversations in each age group. Visit [pcusa.org/ministries/september11](http://pcusa.org/ministries/september11) for an extensive collection of tools and resources for the anniversary and remembrance of September 11.

Go to [pcusa.org/browse/resources-resource/tag/commissioning](http://pcusa.org/browse/resources-resource/tag/commissioning) for suggestions for general Christian education commissioning services.

[pcusa.org/ideas](http://pcusa.org/ideas)

