

# A Faith that Counts

By Jolene Roehlkepartain

The church year often uses numbers to signify the importance of each Sunday (such as the first Sunday after Pentecost and the second Sunday after Pentecost). When we count how our faith affects us in positive ways, we can grow stronger in our faith.

## For

Teen Family

## Season

Summer

## Needed

Bible, Many Ways worksheet, pen for each family member



## Prepare in Advance

- Mark your Bible to Psalm 139:1-18 (or use last page)
- Print the Many Ways worksheet - one for each family member
- Get a pen for each family member

## Activity Plan

1. Say this prayer aloud to begin.

*God, we count on you for every aspect of our lives. Help us to see the many ways that our faith impacts our lives. Amen.*

2. Explain that during the summer, numbers designate the liturgical calendar at church. For example, there's the first Sunday after Pentecost, the second Sunday after Pentecost, the third Sunday after Pentecost, and so on. This numbering goes through the summer and into the fall.
3. Ask someone to read aloud Psalm 139:1-18 (use your Bible or see last page).
4. As a family, talk about these questions:
  - How do you feel about God knowing every part of you?
  - How does this scripture show that you matter to God?
  - How do you want to live your life after reading this scripture? Why?
5. Give each family member a copy the Many Ways worksheet and a pen. Allow time to complete it; counting the ways that their faith makes their life better.
6. After family members finish, ask each person to share one or two examples that he or she wrote. Affirm what your teenager sees about him- or herself.
7. Next time you go to worship: Encourage your teen to find the number of the liturgical calendar listed in your bulletin. If your church doesn't list it, visit <http://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/> (the Vanderbilt Divinity Library) that shows you the number and the scripture associated with the date.

## Many Ways

How does your faith make your life better? Identify each of the ways. For example: I know who I am. It makes my beliefs clearer.

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14.	
15.	



## Search me O God, and know my heart

### Psalm 139:1-18

O Lord, you have searched me and known me! You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar. You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O Lord, you know it altogether. You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it.

Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there! If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me. If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light about me be night," even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is bright as the day, for darkness is as light with you.

For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.

How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! If I would count them, they are more than the sand. I awake, and I am still with you.

