

Resource Notebook for Teachers

JOURNEYS WITH GOD



Second Grade

A Place to Belong

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Journeys with God Revision

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Journeys with God Scope and Sequence

KINDERGARTEN: A TIME OF WONDER

Theme 1: We Are God's Gifts

- Unit 1: I Am Special (Parable of the Lost Sheep; The Prodigal Son; Jesus Blesses the Children; Parable of the Lost Coin)
- Unit 2: The Five Senses (Blind Bartemaus: Eyes to See; Jesus Heals the Deaf Man: Ears to Hear; The Woman Who Washed Jesus' Feet with Perfume: Noses to Smell; Jesus Heals Jairus' Daughter: Feeling with Fingers and Skin; The Wedding Feast: Tongues to Taste)
- Unit 3: We Change and Grow (Samuel's Birth: Hannah's Joy; Samuel Grows; Josiah the Boy King)
- Unit 4: What Can We Share? (Parable of the Mustard Seed; Parable of the Growing Seed; Zacchaeus; David the Shepherd Boy)
- Unit 5: The Fruit of the Spirit (The Shunamite Woman: Love; The Crippled Man: Joy; The Slave Girl: Peace; Lydia: Kindness, Goodness, Gentleness; Wise and Foolish Builders: Patience, Faithfulness, Self-Control)

Theme 2: God's Most Precious Gift

- Unit 6: The Christmas Story (The Angel Visits Mary; From Nazareth to Bethlehem; The Angels Visit the Shepherds; The Wise Men Visit Jesus)
- Unit 7: Jesus Was a Child like You and Me (Fleeing to Egypt; When Jesus Was a Boy; Jesus in the Temple—Jesus Lost)
- Unit 8: Jesus Grew to Be a Man of God (Jesus Is Baptized; Jesus Faces Temptation; Jesus Chooses Disciples; Calming the Storm; Jesus Heals 10 Lepers; Jesus Feeds 5,000 People)

Theme 3: God Teaches Us How to Live

- Unit 9: Love, the Greatest Rule (The 10 Commandments; The Good Samaritan; The Rich Young Ruler and Dorcas)
- Unit 10: Love and Obey (The Widow of Zarephath; Daniel Eats Vegetables; The Fiery Furnace; Daniel Prays/Daniel and the Lions)
- Unit 11: Jesus Is a Friend to You And Me (Jesus and Lazarus; Healing the Lame Man; Peter and Forgiveness—70 x 7; Paul and Barnabas)
- Unit 12: Jesus' Great Gift of Love (Jesus Rides into Jerusalem; The Last Supper; Dying to Live; Jesus Is Alive)

Theme 4: Creation, God's Gift to All People

- Unit 13: What a Wonderful World! (The Beginnings of Creation; Water and Sky; God Creates Plants; God Creates the Sun, Moon, and Stars; God Creates Water and Air Animals; God Creates Land Animals and People; God Rests; Take Care of the World)

FIRST GRADE: IN THE FAMILY OF GOD

Theme 1: Neighbors

- Unit 1: Who Is My Neighbor? (Neighbors Are Those Around Us; Neighbors Are Those We Do Not Know; Neighbors Live Around the World; Neighbors Work Together; Neighbors Cooperate with Each Other; Neighbors Care about Each Other; Neighbors Welcome Each Other; Neighbors Solve Problems Peacefully)

Theme 2: Families

- Unit 2: The Church Family (My Family; The Church Is a Family; I Am Part of the Family of God; Children Are Part of the Family of God; Jesus Wants People to Be Part of the Family of God; An Early Church Family; The Church Family Worships God)
- Unit 3: The Many Faces of God's Family (The World Belongs to God; Brazil; Burkina Faso; Thailand; France; Mexico; Ending Travels; Paul Goes on a Trip)

Theme 3: Preparing for Jesus and Welcoming a Baby

- Unit 4: Nothing Is Impossible with God (An Angel Visits Zechariah; Zechariah and Elizabeth Wait; John Has a Special Purpose)
- Unit 5: A Special Surprise (An Angel Visits Mary; Jesus Is Born; Shepherds Spread Good News)
- Unit 6: Special Religious Traditions of Jesus' Time (Religious Ceremonies for Babies; Jesus Worshipped God; Jerusalem Adventure)

Theme 4: Jesus

- Unit 7: The Light of Christ Has Come (Jesus Prepares for His Mission; Jesus Is Light; Jesus Bring Light)
- Unit 8: Jesus Has Risen! (Jesus Forgives Us; People Praise Jesus; Jesus Dies; Jesus Is Alive; Jesus' Life)

Theme 5: The Beginning

- Unit 9: Trouble in God's World (Creation; Adam and Eve Make Trouble in God's World; Cain Makes Trouble in God's World)
- Unit 10: Hey, Noah, Are You Listening? (Noah Listens to God; Noah Listens to Rain; Noah Listens to God's Promise)

Theme 6: The Founding Family

- Unit 11: Are We There Yet? (Moving Day; Walking with Abraham and Sarah; God Makes Promises to Abraham; Solving Problems Peacefully; Sarah Has a Baby)
- Unit 12: Carrying Out God's Plan (Preparing to Follow God's Plan; Following God through Prayer; Receiving a Blessing)
- Unit 13: A Tale of Two Brothers (Everyone Is Special; A Trick Is Planned; The Trick Continues; Jacob Has a Dream; Another Tricky Situation; Esau Forgives Jacob)
- Unit 14: Faithful in a Strange Land (A Special Gift; Joseph Has Dreams; Joseph Goes to Egypt; Joseph Depends on God; Rags to Riches; Famine Begins; Joseph Forgives)

SECOND GRADE: A PLACE TO BELONG**Theme 1: Slaves in Egypt**

- Unit 1: Who Will Free Us? (God's Promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; Slaves in Egypt; Moses in the Bulrushes; The Burning Bush)

Theme 2: Exodus from Egypt

- Unit 2: God with Us (Let My People Go; A Stubborn Pharaoh; The Exodus)
- Unit 3: The Sinai Experience (Manna, Cloud and Fire; The Ten Words; The Golden Calf; Broken Tablets; The Ark of the Covenant)
- Unit 4: Choices in the Wilderness (Spies in the Land of Milk and Honey; The Blossoming Rod; Living with the Consequences)
- Unit 5: Entering the Promised Land (God Chooses Joshua; Farewell and Blessing; Victory in the New Land; We Will Serve the Lord)

Theme 3: Helping Others Find a Place to Belong

- Unit 6: People from Other Places Belong to God's Kingdom (Life's Journey; God Is Faithful; A Happy Ending; Jonah and the Great Fish; Jonah Speaks to the Ninevites)

Theme 4: Jesus Invites All People to Belong

- Unit 7: Telling the Christmas Story (Marking the Days; Celebrating with Others; The Census; Mary and Joseph's Journey; The Innkeeper's Story; Responding to the Story; A Christmas Walk)
- Unit 8: God's Chosen Servant (Prophets Proclaim Hope; Follow Me; Jesus Calls the Twelve; Water into Wine)
- Unit 9: Jesus Came for Everyone (Jesus Begins His Ministry; Jesus Travels from Town to Town; Jesus Comes to Jericho; Jesus and Zacchaeus; The Parable of the Good Shepherd; The Woman at the Well)
- Unit 10: Teachings of Jesus (The First and Greatest Commandment; Showing Love for God; Showing Love for Others; Jesus Teaches about Prayer)

Unit 11: Telling the Easter Story (Jesus Is Crucified and Rises Again!; Three Women, One Empty Tomb; The Walk to Emmaus; Jesus and Thomas; The Ascension of Jesus)

Theme 5: Living for Christ

Unit 12: Sharing the Good News (Turning Point; The Great Commission; Philip Spreads the Good News to Samaria; Philip and the Ethiopian)

Unit 13: The Holy Spirit Lives in Us (Pentecost, I Was Hungry, I Was a Stranger, Living as Servants, Service Around the World)

THIRD GRADE: HEROES OF FAITH, SERVANTS OF GOD

Theme 1: Old Testament Heroes

Unit 1: Joshua Follows God (The Israelites and the Gibeonites, The Sun Stood Still, The Importance of the Covenant, Joshua's Last Speech)

Unit 2: Judges (Deborah, Gideon, and Samson)

Unit 3: Samuel (The Birth of Samuel, Samuel Hears God's Voice)

Unit 4: David (David's Early Years; David, A Friend of Jonathan; A Fugitive Becomes King)

Theme 2: Christmas

Unit 5: Jesus (God's Greatest Gift—The Birth of Jesus)

Theme 3: Prophets, Kings, and Queens

Unit 6: Prophets (The Widow of Zarephath, Elijah and the Prophets of Baal, Elisha and the Shunamite Woman, Elisha's Miracles Touched Many People)

Unit 7: A King and a Queen (Josiah and Esther)

Theme 4: New Testament Heroes

Unit 8: The Coming of the Messiah

Unit 9: Peter (Called by Christ, Peter and His Promise, Feeding the Sheep)

Unit 10: The Martyr and the Persecutor (Stephen, Saul and His Conversion, The Apostle Paul's Writings)

Theme 5: Faith Heroes Today

Unit 11: Faith Heroes Today (We Are Salt and Light)

FOURTH GRADE: FREE TO SERVE

Theme 1: Bound to Serve

Unit 1: Freedom for What? (Review; Discussion on freedom and choosing to serve God vs. earthly kings and rulers.)

Theme 2: Kingship Choices

Unit 2: Samuel: Israel's Last Judge (Political and social climate of Israel; events leading up to Israel's request for a human king.)

Unit 3: Saul: Slave to Power (This unit assumes 3rd grade has covered information on David and Saul and builds from there. This unit on Saul is much more in-depth. If students are unfamiliar with the stories of David before he becomes king, 4th grade may want to adapt 3rd grade material to fit into this unit.)

Unit 4: David: The Servant King (David's kingship)

Unit 5: Solomon: Wisdom and Folly (Solving puzzles and problems; conflict resolution; learning about Proverbs; economic oppression)

Unit 6: Tyrants and Servant Kings (Looks at the rulers of the divided kingdom)

Theme 3: Jesus, the Servant King

Unit 7: Anticipation and Proclamation (Roman rule and what Jews expected from a Messiah)

Unit 8: The Messiah is Born! (Christmas)

Unit 9: Jesus' Choices (Jesus' baptism; temptations in the desert; 12 disciples; our choices)

Unit 10: Jesus' Freedom Ministry (People whose lives changed because of Jesus)

Unit 11: Who Is Jesus? (Cross symbols and other activities leading up to Easter)

Unit 12: Celebrate! (Easter)

Theme 4: Freedom From and Freedom For

Unit 13: Freed From the Law (Paul)

Unit 14: Just What? (Study of Philemon; discussions of just living in literature discussion groups)

FIFTH GRADE: GOD IS PRESENT ON THE WAY**Theme 1: Ancestral Faith Families**

Unit 1: God Creates (Explains Travel Log and Time Line projects, Order Out of Chaos)

Unit 2: Humans Fall into Sin (Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, The Flood, The Tower of Babel)

Unit 3: God Creates a New People (The Culture of Abraham and Sarah, God's Call and Covenant with Abraham, Isaac's Peaceful Wells, Jacob and Esau, Joseph, First Fruits Celebration)

Theme 2: The Exodus and Wilderness Wanderings

Unit 4: God Saves God's People (Reviews Exodus events; God Reveals His Name—Yahweh; Passover Seder)

Unit 5: God Establishes God's Law (Reviews the wilderness experience; the Ten Commandments, the Sabbath, the Tabernacle)

Theme 3: From Conquest to Exile

Unit 6: The Promised Land (Joshua, Deborah, Ruth)

Unit 7: Christmas (Songs of the Bible, Songs of Luke, Christmas Carols, Our Christmas Traditions)

Unit 8: Prophets, Kings, and Nations (Saul, David, Solomon Builds the Temple, Solomon's Reign, Feast of the Tabernacles, Elijah, Prophets of God, Empires that Conquered Judah and Israel)

Theme 4: The New Testament Drama

Unit 9: God Saves God's People and Fulfills the Promise (Study of the Gospel of John, Easter)

Unit 10: A New Hope (Focus on Revelation and Mennonite persecution)

The first 8 units of 5th grade take one last look at Israel's chronological history from a Salvation History point of view. This puts the whole story together. While each grade in K-4 studied part of the story, 5th grade now puts it all together with new parts of the story not heard or understood before. The last half of Unit 8 is imperative to prepare for 6th grade.

SIXTH GRADE: GOOD NEWS! JESUS THE MESSIAH IS HERE**Theme 1: Israel In Exile**

Unit 1: Far from Home (Exiles in Babylon)

Unit 2: Out of the Ashes (Messages of hope from Ezekial and Isaiah)

Unit 3: Old Stories, New Meanings (A loving creation story vs. the creation account of Israel's captors)

Theme 2: People of the Homecoming

Unit 4: Return and Restoration (Rebuilding the temple; books of Ezra and Nehemiah)

Unit 5: Neighbors (Nehemiah handles neighbors who try to interfere with the temple rebuilding; decisions today)

Theme 3: The Kingdom of God

Unit 6: A Christmas Peace

Unit 7: Setting the Scene for the Gospels (The intertestamental period; the Maccabean revolt, the Diaspora, the synagogue)

Unit 8: The Ministry of Jesus (Jesus shows a different way)

Unit 9: The Teachings of Jesus (Discussion on rules; the Sermon on the Mount; the prodigal son and God's forgiveness; study of several parables)

Unit 10: The Easter Story

Theme 4: The Early Church

Unit 11: Spreading the Good News (Jesus' followers respond to the Spirit's leading;
Paul: a bridge between Jews and Greeks)

Unit 12: Three Hundred Years (The early church story)

SEVENTH AND EIGHTH GRADES: RUNNING THE RACE

There are 7 units for middle school. The theme for all 7 units is Running the Race. The 7 units are:

- **At the Crossroads** (Talks about the many choices and crossroads in our lives, decision-making skills based on the life of Jesus and being a Christian, interpersonal skills and solving conflicts.)
- **Have I Got News for You!** (A study of the prophets: What is a prophet? The place of prophets in Israel, before and after the exile. Prophets include: Moses, Miriam, Deborah, Amos, Jeremiah, Elijah, Jonah, Huldah, Isaiah, Haggai, Anna, John the Baptist, and Jesus)
- **Images of God** (Combines the two older units, *Will Somebody Please Turn the Light On? Can't You See It's Dark in Here?* and *The Master Potter*.)
- **Acts 29!** (A study of the book of Acts, the young church, and issues faced as people sought to be faithful)
- **Creative Bible Study** (Students learn basic principles for inductive Bible study, learn various styles of journaling, and engage in a Bible study of one of the four Gospels— Luke is recommended.)
- **Practical Christian Living** (A study of the book of James)
- **Anabaptist History** (An introduction to Anabaptist history and theology)

Introduction to Journeys with God

Development and Organization

WHY WAS THIS CURRICULUM DEVELOPED?

God indeed invites us to be fellow travelers as we journey through life. The Christian school has unique opportunity to walk with families and churches as they seek to nurture children's faith development. **Journeys with God** grew out of an assessed need. Mennonite Elementary Education Council, representing numerous schools, felt that **Christian educators needed a Bible curriculum that would:**

- Promote positive attitudes toward Bible learning.
- Exhibit sensitivity to the spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and physical needs of children at each grade level.
- Encourage active learning with emphasis on discussion, creative and meaningful activities, Bible reference skills, and Bible study methods.
- Connect with personal experiences of students.
- Incorporate worship with biblical study.
- Reflect Anabaptist theology and history at each grade level.
- Provide teachers with biblical background to ensure in-depth study of content and confidence in teaching.
- Provide specific ideas and lesson plans while remaining flexible enough for teachers to sculpt lessons to fit their unique situations.

Journeys with God has been developed with the above criteria in mind. The Education and Publishing Council, with representation from educators, principals, curriculum specialists, pastors, theologians, publishers, and teacher educators, provided overall vision and guidance. Classroom teachers worked as collaborators throughout the development stages. They worked with writers to brainstorm creative ways of teaching specific content. Teachers pilot-tested materials in their classrooms. Many people shared ideas and provided constructive criticism and guidance along the way. As a collaborative community, we have created materials that invite children to become part of the biblical story. **Listening to and participating in the stories of God's people helps children build a firm foundation for faithful living as they move from shared/experiential faith toward a more mature and owned faith.**

HOW IS THE CURRICULUM ORGANIZED?

Once children's needs at each level were indentified, we began to explore possible options for organizing the material. **Because children need a sense of the Bible as a whole,** we have arranged content in a way that meets children's needs, while paying attention to chronology.

For example, second graders are trying to find their niche at home, church, and school. The title of second grade is *A Place to Belong*. The year begins with Moses and follows the Israelites on the Exodus journey. The theme ends when Joshua

leads Israel into the Promised Land. Children then study how Naomi found a place to belong, with the help of Boaz and Ruth. The year culminates with a study of how Jesus invites all people to belong. In each unit, children are encouraged to reflect on their own lives. How do they help people belong, at home, church, and school? In what ways might they knowingly or unknowingly keep others from belonging?

We have focused on content that we feel is most applicable at each grade level. At the same time, children are growing in their understanding of when events took place and what culture was like at that time.

Content presented in kindergarten through fourth grade is designed to give children a sense of the biblical story as a whole. Students will learn many stories, place them onto the timelines provided, and apply what they learn to their everyday lives.

In fifth through eighth grades, children will revisit portions of familiar stories. Students may pursue in-depth study of specific aspects and biblical truths that would not have held meaning for them at an earlier time. They are not merely revisiting a story. Instead, familiarity with the story enables students to focus on a specific event or theme while keeping it embedded in the context of the story as a whole.

A kindergarten child might hear the story of 12-year-old Jesus in the temple and remember what it was like to be lost at the supermarket last week. Middle-school children might decide that Jesus was old enough to go off on his own. They may empathize when learning that Jesus neglected to tell his parents where he was going and then lost track of time. As adults, we might view the story through the eyes of Joseph and Mary. Joseph likely lost three days' wages while looking for Jesus. And Mary must have been frantic!

Each time we encounter a story, it is created anew. Because of our life experiences, what we bring to the story continues to change. This impacts what we glean from each story. Christians are a storytelling people. God told the Israelites to tell their stories from generation to generation. In telling and remembering the stories of God's people, we begin to make connections between our stories and the stories of others.

As individuals, we are weaving our own stories as we respond to God in our daily lives. Jesus taught through stories. Every story holds something for all, no matter how young or old. **As children move through the carefully constructed scope and sequence of Journeys with God, they will make connections from one story to another. They will find ways to apply biblical truths in their personal lives.**

TEACHING AND LEARNING THROUGH THEMES

Journeys with God: Grades Seven and Eight originally included eight units. Two of these units have now been combined into one unit, focusing on metaphors of God. The names of the previous two units were *The Master Potter* and *Will Somebody Please Turn the Lights On? Can't You See It's Dark in Here?* The new title of the combined unit is *Images of God*.

Originally, each of the eight units was to cover one marking period. The curriculum was designed so that four units were taught in seventh grade and four units in eighth grade. Teachers found that some of the units took longer than one quarter to teach, and asked that the two units mentioned above be combined.

The current seven units are organized under the theme of ***Running the Race***. There is no specific order in which they must be taught. The seven units are:

Anabaptist History

Acts 29!

At the Crossroads

Creative Bible Study

Practical Christian Living

Have I Got News for You!

Images of God

You will notice that the units have been broken into several content strands. This lets you organize large amounts of information into manageable chunks. The strands are related to one another. Teaching in this way invites students to make connections from one unit to another, as well as content within specific units.

HOW UNITS ARE ORGANIZED

For the middle school curriculum, each unit has a **Table of Contents** page. The Table of Contents includes the names of all strands. Under each strand title are listed the names and page numbers of each lesson within the strand. The lesson title will be in smaller print. For the elementary curriculum, each grade level has a **Table of Contents** at the beginning of the teacher's manual. The Table of Contents includes the theme, the units within each theme, and the lessons within each unit.

A **Unit Overview** page is included, to give the teacher a quick understanding of what the unit will cover. A **Unit Information** page gives another short summary of the unit, listing key Bible texts, essential understandings, worship suggestions, resources for further study, assessing teaching/learning, and memory passages.

Appropriate **Biblical Background** appears with each corresponding content strand. Please read the Biblical Background thoroughly. Teachers surveyed said they often felt uncomfortable teaching Bible, because they didn't have enough background and could only scratch the surface. In-depth understanding of biblical stories requires thorough knowledge of the culture and geography of that time period. Imparting this knowledge to students is crucial. Simply retelling the story is not enough! Biblical background is designed so that you can build on what students have learned in prior years. It is spiral in nature.

You will discover many opportunities to highlight specific facts and understandings as you implement the units and strands. **Journeys with God has tried to anticipate questions students might ask and background they will need** as they move to higher levels of understanding.

A WORD ABOUT ASSESSING TEACHING / LEARNING

In talking with teachers, the following question has frequently emerged: **"How should we grade Bible?"** Perhaps this question comes from an underlying notion that there is something different about teaching Bible. More recently, Christians have become concerned about the biblical literacy of the next generation. Some schools give Bible grades based on student performance in Bible memory. Other schools combine student performance in Bible class with performance in Bible memory for such a grade.

Before we address methods of grading in Bible class, we must first ask:

1. What is the purpose of teaching Bible?
2. What difference should it make in the lives of students?

We are involved in the business of people-making. We are concerned with spiritual growth and nurture. The Bible is an authoritative and trustworthy guide for faith and life. God's Word is applicable to all persons, at every stage of life.

In striving to be faithful servants, we turn to God in prayerful reading of Scripture. At times, life situations prompt biblical study of a specific theme. Often we see ourselves in biblical stories, as we make connections from text to our own lives. We want students to make important connections throughout the grades.

Why are these connections so important? Because we want students to be Christlike, God's faithful servants.

Head Knowledge and Education of the Heart

We have already discussed the importance of **head knowledge**. Students need to be familiar with the stories, understand the culture of biblical times, project an overall concept of chronology. They need to grasp key concepts related to geography and political history of the regions studied. This brings us to the second question.

What difference should it make? Knowledge does not imply understanding. Performance is not always an indicator of competence. In other words, if a child is to understand peace, he must first experience peace. In order to forgive, one must be forgiven. Herein enters the **education of the heart**.

Teachers can model techniques of peace and reconciliation on a daily basis, and should encourage students to do the same. **The ways in which we evaluate or assess student learning must be consistent with our concern for community and unconditional acceptance.** We are each on a journey. Not one of us has arrived!

As a teacher, I am grateful when students exhibit mastery of information. Yet I am truly blessed when I see children applying God's word in their personal lives. For example, Raelynne might score 100 percent on a test covering the Beatitudes. She may even recite the passage from memory, without the slightest pause. Yet she begins a scuffle on the basketball court at recess, just because an opponent bumped her. On the other hand, Jacob may have trouble memorizing passages and perform miserably on tests, yet he shows amazing application of biblical principles when relating to peers each day.

"The Lesson"

Please take time to read and reflect on the poem we have included on page 13. I have shared "The Lesson" with many preservice teachers in my college courses over the years. Most recently I placed a copy of this treasure on the bulletin board in my office, as a prominent reminder when my perspective becomes skewed. I share it with you as impetus for your thinking.

Jesus, as Master Teacher, walked with the disciples. He encouraged, exhorted, and admonished. In the course of daily living, Jesus shared himself with this band of eager students. Questions emerged from Jesus' teachings as well as the life situations he shared with his disciples.

As teachers, we can celebrate each child. Our goal is to enable young people to find their own strengths and weaknesses, as they strive to be faithful followers of Christ. With some children, this will take a lot of prayer. With others, a good deal of patience. And with some youngsters, a small piece of teaching.

In following Christ's example, we can guarantee each child love, acceptance, and forgiveness. We must commit ourselves to planting seeds that will be nourished and nurtured by many others along the way. We are, to use the words of our theme song, pilgrims on a journey!

The Lesson

Then Jesus took his disciples up the mountain and gathering them around him, he taught them saying:

Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are the meek,
Blessed are they who mourn.
Blessed are the merciful.
Blessed are they who thirst for justice.
Blessed are you when persecuted.
Blessed are you when you suffer.
Be glad and rejoice, for your reward in heaven is great.

Then Simon Peter said,
 “Do we have to write this down?”
and Andrew said,
 “Do we have to turn it in?”
and James said,
 “Does spelling count?”
Philip said,
 “Will this be on the test?”
and Bartholomew said,
 “What if we don’t know it?”
and John said,
 “The other disciples didn’t have to learn this!”
and Matthew said,
 “When do we get out of here?”
and Judas said,
 “What does this have to do with real life?”
and the other disciples likewise.

Then one of the Pharisees who was present
 asked to see Jesus’ lesson plan
 and inquired of Jesus
His terminal objectives in the cognitive domain.

And Jesus wept.

Author unknown

You will need to discern God’s leading as you assess teaching and learning in your classroom. The discussion we have provided stems from concerns we have heard from teachers as we discussed this project. Teachers have asked for help in this area.

Grading Bible

In one discussion with a group of teachers, I discovered that they, like many other teachers, felt uncomfortable with “giving grades” for Bible. One teacher stated, “We don’t want to give grades for Bible, but the principals make us do it!”

When sharing this concern with a group of principals, I learned that principals didn’t agree with giving grades for Bible any more than teachers did! They felt that parents wanted a grade for their children in Bible. Giving a grade gave Bible the same level of importance as all other subject areas. After all, these were Christian schools!

I consulted a few parents, and was amazed to learn that these parents weren’t overly concerned with letter grades. They were more interested in what their children were doing in Bible classes and how teachers perceived their children’s spiritual growth.

Based on this information, we have tried to provide you with materials that will inform parents about the nature of your studies. We also make several suggestions about methods of assessing your teaching, as well as student learning. These suggestions are based on assessment as a way of holding each other accountable. Teachers are accountable to nurture, guide, instruct, and facilitate learning. Students are accountable to seek knowledge and participate in learning experiences to the fullest of their abilities.

We recognize that there is often tension between teachers and students over grades. Some students might ask, “Why should I do this if I’m not going to get a grade for it?” **Many of the following suggestions focus on mutual accountability—teachers and students working together to set goals and assess teaching and learning. Written evaluation could replace grades.**

We understand that teachers must work within the existing structures of your individual schools. We have included suggestions for those schools looking for an alternative to grading in Bible classes, which is consistent with Anabaptist theology.

- **Send a short note to each child’s parents** on a regular basis. You may decide to do this once each grading period. To make it manageable, concentrate on three or four children each week. You’ll be amazed at how easy it is, if you stick to your schedule, and how important these notes are to parents. Free periods when children are in another class work well for such activity.
- For each grading period, **encourage students to keep a portfolio** of things they have done in Bible class. Purpose: To take home at the end of the grading period, for reviewing with parents what they have studied. Students can decide what to include in their portfolios. Each piece must be dated. You may require a minimum number of pieces to be included in each folder. You may even want to use the portfolio as a basis for a conference with each child. Discuss what they have learned, activities they have enjoyed, and ways they have grown spiritually.
- **Invite children to set small goals for themselves.** This could be as often as once a month. Perhaps once a grading period would work best for you. You can do this as a class. Talk about possible goals with the group. Make a list on the chalkboard. Invite students to choose one of two of these

goals for their own personal growth during a designated time period. They may also choose a goal that is not on the list. Distribute slips of paper on which to write their goals. Be sure to set goals for yourself, too! Ask students to reread their goals and pray about them.

Give each student an envelope. Ask them to put their paper slips inside, close the envelope (do not seal, so it can be used again), and sign their name on the outside. Collect the envelopes. You may want to put them where students can review their goals from time to time. Bring out the envelopes occasionally, for students to check their progress. At the end of the designated period, children can write a sentence or two stating whether or not they met their goals, and the reasons. You may want to have a conference with each child to discuss the goals. Children can then send their goal slips home with their report cards.

- **Encourage discussion in your classroom.** Work to move yourself out of the conversation so that students are in dialogue with one another. You will learn a great deal about students' understandings when you listen and observe. Attention to what students show they need to know, and reflecting on that, should play a major role in your planning. Develop a list of goals for students at your grade level. Distribute them at the beginning of the year, or at the beginning of each unit. **Work with students at identifying specific areas of strength. Develop plans for weak areas.** Celebrate when a goal has been met.
- Whenever possible, **involve students in the evaluation process.**
- **Observe students as they talk and work together.** Their insights will often emerge in the context of meaningful activity. What do their actions and discussions tell you?
- **Send positive notes home** with at least five children each week, describing a specific positive thing they have done. Be sure all children have taken a note home before cycling through the class again. You'll be amazed at the difference this will make! You may want to invite students to write notes for one another. *Note:* Do the most difficult students first. They'll remember it!
- **Faith development is a continual process.** Students will be inconsistent in exhibiting certain behaviors. Look at your own life and you'll understand!
- **Start a classroom newspaper** as part of language arts or social studies class. Include a section on Bible class, so others will know what you have been doing.
- Just a reminder: The events and truths students remember may be quite different from the things you think are important. **Remember that you are at a different place in your journey.** Try to learn from what students name as highlights, and build on them.
- **Talk with students about options for evaluating each unit.** They will have good ideas!
- If grades at your school are based solely on memorizing Scripture, **be sure that the grading report describes the activity.** It should be called "Memory Passages" or "Memorizing Scripture," instead of "Bible."

- If you continue with letter grades for Bible classes, be sure to take into account a wide variety of factors, so that the grade is not based on how well a student writes, memorizes, or takes tests. **The evaluations should reflect authentic application of the desired objectives.** To master the concept, I must be able to apply it, not simply score well on a test.
- **When testing for knowledge, give open-note tests.** This encourages students to become better at recording and organizing information, a skill they will need as they move into the upper grades. This method invites students to learn as they take the test. It also allows you to construct tests that are rigorous and comprehensive.
- **Remember to assess your own teaching.** If several children have not yet mastered a concept, perhaps it is the teaching method. They may simply not be ready for the concept at this phase of their journey. When something goes wrong, ask yourself: How could I have prevented it from happening? What's going on here? This could change your life!

Suggestions for assessing teaching and learning are included with each unit. We pray that this discussion has given you food for thought. You are a trained professional. You have the insight and knowledge needed to meet the needs of the students you teach. Blessings!

BIBLE REFERENCE SKILLS

A list of Bible reference skills for **Journeys with God** appears on page 21. **This list indicates the grade level in which the skill is introduced (I), perpetuated (P), and mastered (M).** Children can begin using reference materials at an early age. What they can do with such materials will change as they become more proficient as readers.

Many Bible reference skills are introduced at kindergarten level. They will be perpetuated, reviewed, and reinforced as children develop and mature. Mastery indicates the ability to perform a skill at its most basic level.

For example, a teacher can introduce first-grade children to the table of contents in their Bibles. Once they have been introduced to the table of contents and have seen their teacher use it periodically, they will begin to explore it for themselves. We would expect teachers to refer to the table of contents in first and second grades, thus perpetuating (providing authentic experiences in which to further explore) this skill.

In third grade, students have the reading ability to master this skill as they use the table of contents independently in their own reference work. As students move through the grades, such concepts will be perpetuated and fine-tuned. Children will use many types of tables of contents as they explore a variety of reference materials. Once students have mastered a skill, they should have many opportunities to use it.

You will notice that many reference skills are perpetuated in fifth grade. This does not mean that students will not talk about and extend their abilities in these areas. Once they have reached a basic mastery, they have not finished learning. They need to continue stretching and growing. As an adult, you probably make new discoveries about the index and concordance as you use them. The key is to make sure children have the opportunity to explore reference materials as often as possible.

BIBLE REFERENCE SKILLS

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7-8
Content Categorization								
Distinction between stories of Old Testament and New Testament	I	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Sequence of books in Old Testament			I	M	P	P	P	P
Sequence of books in New Testament			I	M	P	P	P	P
Relationships between key events in the biblical story	I	P	P	P	P	P	P	M
Overall sense of biblical chronology and cultural knowledge	I	P	P	P	M	P	P	P
Locating Information								
Table of contents		I	P	M	P	P	P	P
Index to subjects or topics			I	M	P	P	P	P
Index to maps			I	P	M	P	P	P
Skimming and scanning for information			I	P	P	M	P	P
Use of Study Tools								
Study notes					I	P	M	P
Footnotes					I	P	M	P
Outlines				I	P	P	M	P
Maps	I	P	P	P	M	P	P	P
Timelines	I	P	P	M	P	P	P	P
Charts and tables	I	P	P	P	M	P	P	P
Illustrations and diagrams	I	P	M	P	P	P	P	P
Use of Bible Supplements								
Bible concordances					I	P	P	M
Bible commentaries					I	P	P	M
Bible encyclopedias and dictionaries						I	M	P
Bible atlases			I	P	P	P	P	M
Topical Bibles						I	M	P
Practical Application								
Uses the Bible as a guide in personal life	I	P	P	P	P	P	P	P

I = Introduced, P = Perpetuated, M = Mastered

KEY BIBLE TEXTS

The Key Bible Texts checklist, pages 23-32, shows all of the primary Scripture passages covered in this curriculum. Teachers may look at the list to see which passages will be studied in their grade level. The checklist also shows the primary passages studied in other grades, so a quick survey will show the teacher what passages have been studied before and after any given grade level. The Key Bible Texts from this chart can be found at the beginning of the corresponding unit in each Unit Information section. **Journeys with God** strives to cover passages from both the Old and New Testaments, while helping children to become familiar with the Bible, read it, and be nurtured by it.

MEMORY PASSAGES

It is important for children to learn the discipline of memorizing Scripture. This curriculum connects Scripture to Bible lessons and stories so that each supports the other, helping children to understand and remember the Scripture. Writers have incorporated ideas for learning the memory work into the curriculum.

The Memory Passages list on page 33 shows all of the memory passages for each unit in each grade level. This includes memory passages that are used within the lesson plans as well as bonus memory passages. Teachers may select any of the given memory passages for a unit. They may also choose to use the bonus memory passages for extra credit. We have included more than one passage with each unit, so you and your students may choose the passage that best suits your situation. Students who find it difficult to memorize long passages may experience success with shorter passages. Others may enjoy the challenge of memorizing longer passages.

Older students often appreciate choosing from the recommended memory passages. This increases their motivation to study and may help them internalize specific passages that have deep meaning for them.

PEACE WORKS

Many teachers have asked for a component of **Journeys with God** that specifically teaches conflict resolution skills. Although **Journeys with God** already incorporates the teachings of Jesus and peacemaking skills within the curriculum, we recognize that teachers may wish to have a supplement to go along with it.

One resource for peace education skills that Journeys with God can endorse is Peace Works, from the Peace Education Foundation. This curriculum includes teacher and student books for each level, pre-kindergarten through grade 12. Through Peace Works, children learn to deal creatively and constructively with conflict. They are taught skills that empower them to find non-destructive ways to settle conflicts and to live in harmony with themselves, others, and their world. This is meant to be a supplement, not a replacement of **Journeys with God**. The philosophy fits well with **Journeys with God**, and can easily be used in conjunction with the lessons.

For more information, write to:

Peace Works
Peace Education Foundation
1900 Biscayne Blvd.
Miami, FL 33132-1025
1-800-749-8838

KEY BIBLE TEXTS USED IN JOURNEYS WITH GOD

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7-8
Genesis								
1:1		x						
1:1-2:15	x							
1:26	x							
1-2							x	x
1-6						x		
4:2-16		x						
6-9:17					x			
6:9-9:29		x						
11						x		
11:31-32		x						
12:1-10					x			
12-21		x						
12-50						x		
13:14-18		x						
17:1-8		x						
22:1-18					x			
24		x						
25:19-34		x						
27:1-35					x			
27-33		x						
28:10-17					x			
37-46		x						
50:15-21		x						
Exodus								
1:1-14					x			
1-2:25			x					
1-15						x		
3:1-22								x
3-4:20					x			
4:29-6:8			x					
5:1-20					x			
7-11			x					
13:17-15:21			x					
15:22-17:7			x					
16:1-2		x						
19						x		
19-21			x					
20	x					x		
23						x		
24						x		
25						x		
25:10-22			x					
26						x		
32:1-34:35			x					
Leviticus								
12		x						
19						x		
19:18	x	x						
23:33-44						x		
26:11,12			x					
Numbers								
11			x					
13			x		x			
14			x		x			
17			x					
20			x					
27:12-23			x					

Key Bible texts, continued

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7-8
Deuteronomy								
4:32	x							
5:1-22						x		
6:1-25						x		
6:4-9	x	x			x			
17:14-20						x		
18	x							
18:14-22								x
26:1-22						x		
30							x	
33			x					
34						x		
Joshua								
1-4						x		
1-6			x					
2:1-24					x			
4:19-24					x			
6						x		
8						x		
9:1-27				x				
10:1-15				x				
20-21			x					
23				x				
24			x	x		x		
Judges								
1						x		
2:6-19						x		
4				x		x		
5				x		x		
6-7				x				
8:22-23				x				
11-27								x
13-16				x				
Ruth								
Book of Ruth							x	
1-4			x					
1:1-17					x			
1 Samuel								
Book of 1 Samuel						x		
1				x	x			
2:1-10				x				
2:18-21				x				
2:18-28	x							
2:26				x				
3:1-21	x			x				
4: 12-18				x				
4-8					x			
7:2-12					x			
8					x			
10:23					x			
11:1-11					x			
12:1-4					x			
12:12-15					x			
12:24-25					x			
13:1-22					x			
15:1-35					x			
16	x							
16:1-13				x	x			

Key Bible texts, continued

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7-8
16-31					x			
17				x				
18-19				x				
20				x				
20:15					x			
20:42					x			
24				x				
24:16-22					x			
26				x				
2 Samuel								
Book of 2 Samuel						x		
1-2:3					x			
2:4-5:25					x			
2:1-5				x				
7					x			
7:5-16				x				
9					x			
11					x			
11:1-27					x			
12					x			
21:15-24:1					x			
1 Kings								
Book of 1 Kings					x	x		
1-2					x			
1-12					x			
10-22					x			
17								x
17:7-24	x			x				
18				x				x
19				x				x
2 Kings								
Book of 2 Kings						x		
1-13:20				x				
2:1-14				x				
4:8-11	x							
4:8-36				x				
5:1-18	x							
8:1-8				x				
18:1-8					x			
20:1-11					x			
22-23	x			x				
22:1-23:3					x			
24-25							x	
1 Chronicles								
15-29						x		
2 Chronicles								
1:7-13					x			
12-36					x			
34-35				x				
Ezra								
1-5							x	
9							x	
10:1-4							x	
Nehemiah								
1-7							x	
9							x	
13:1-3							x	
23-27							x	

Key Bible texts, continued

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7-8
Esther								
Book of Esther				x				
Job								
10:9a								x
Psalms								
Book of Psalms						x		
3								x
8:2	x							
8:6-8	x							
19:1	x							
22					x			
23						x		x
24:1-2	x	x						
24:7-10								x
32					x			
33:6-9	x							
34:8	x							
36:5-6	x							
62:1-2								x
66:1	x							
68:6	x	x						x
72					x			
90						x		
92:14	x							
93		x						
95:1	x							
96		x						
96:11-12	x							
104							x	
119:103	x							
139								x
139:1-12						x		
141:8	x							x
142	x							
Proverbs								
3:28-31				x				
8:22		x						
8:33								x
18:15	x							
25:9	x							
Ecclesiastes								
3:4		x						
Song of Solomon								
Isaiah								
2:1-4		x						
7								x
7:10-17							x	
7:14								x
9			x		x			
9:1-7							x	
9:6-7				x	x			
9:26-7			x					
11:1-2a								x
11:1-9			x					
24:4-5								x
40-66	x							
40:31							x	
42:1-4								x
42:5								x

Key Bible texts, continued

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7-8
43:1-7	x							
45:5,7	x							
45:22	x							
53		x						
55:7					x			
62:4		x						
66:12-13	x							
Jeremiah								
Book of Jeremiah								x
1						x		
2:7								x
3:12	x							
7		x						
11							x	
13							x	
18								x
18-20								x
29								x
31:35-37							x	
31:31-34	x							
32							x	
34								x
Lamentations							x	
Ezekiel								
34							x	
34:18						x		
Daniel								
1	x							
3	x							
6	x							
1-6	x							
Hosea								
Book of Hosea							x	
Joel								
2:28						x		
Amos								
Book of Amos	x							
4:13						x		
4-5	x							
Obadiah								
Jonah								
Book of Jonah								x
1-4							x	
Micah								
4:1-5			x					x
5:2								x
6:8					x			
Nahum					x			
Habakkuk								
Zephaniah								
Haggai								
Zechariah								
Book of Zechariah							x	
Malachi								
2:10							x	
Matthew								
Book of Matthew		x						
1							x	x
1:1-17						x	x	

Key Bible texts, continued

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7-8
1:18-2:12					x	x		
2:1-5	x	x						
2:7-12			x					
2:13-23			x					
3	x							
3:1-18				x	x			
3:13-17		x						
4:1-11	x	x						
4:18-22	x							
5:1-12	x		x					
5:9				x				
5:13-16	x	x						
5:14-16				x				
5:17-20		x						
5:21-26		x			x			
5:39	x							
5:43-44								x
5-7				x				x
6:7-15							x	
6:22			x					
6:43-48	x							
7:12								x
7:13-14	x							
8:23-26								x
10:1-4	x							
10:2-4	x		x					
10:9-14				x				
10:19-20			x					
10:39								x
11:1-19								x
11:25-26				x				
13	x							
13:16							x	
13:31-32	x							
14:1-12	x							
14:13-21				x				
14:25-33	x							
16:13-16				x				
16:13-18					x			
17:1-8				x				
18:10-14				x				
18:15-35			x					
18:21-35							x	x
19:13-15	x							
20:25-28	x							
21:1-11			x					
22:34-40	x	x						
23:23-28	x	x	x					
23:37-39					x			
24:14			x					
25:32-46		x						
25:40			x					
26:6-13	x							
26:17-30	x							
26-28	x							
27:11-66							x	
27:27-28:16	x							
28:1-10		x	x					
28:16-20	x		x					

Key Bible texts, continued

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7-8
28:19,20			x					
37-40		x						
Mark								
Book of Mark					x			
1:1-10							x	
1:14-18		x						
1:16-20				x				
3:13-19	x							
4:21-23	x							
4:26-29		x						
4:35-41	x							
5:21-43	x							
6:7-12		x						
6:30-44			x					
7:31-37	x							
9:33-36	x							
10: 13-16		x						
10:17-22	x							
10:46-52					x			
11:1-10	x	x						
11:1-11	x		x					
11:25		x						
12:28-34	x							
14-16	x	x	x					
14:12-26							x	
14:27-41	x							
14:32-42				x				
15:1-16:8					x			
16:15		x						
16:19-20								x
Luke								
Book of Luke			x					
1:5-25							x	x
1:57-66		x						
1:57-80				x				
1:26-38		x						
1:26-56	x							
1:76-79		x						
1-3								x
2						x		
2:1-7							x	
2:1-20, 22-40			x					
2:13-38	x	x						
2:21-51				x				
2:41-52		x						
3:1-22	x							
3:10-14		x						
3:21-22				x				
4:1-13	x							
4:14-21	x				x			x
4:18-19	x	x						
4:38-44								x
5:1-11			x					
5:17-26		x						
5:27-32	x							
6:12-16	x	x						
6:20-31	x				x			
6:31								x

Key Bible texts, continued

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7-8
6:46-49	x	x						
8:1-15	x							
8:15				x				
8:22-25	x							
8:40-54	x							
9:1,3-5	x	x						
10:29-42			x					
11:4		x						
13:20-21	x							
14:15-24				x				
15:1-5	x							
15:11-31			x					
15:11-32							x	
16:19-25	x							
17:11-19							x	
17:20-21	x							
18:9-14								x
18:15-17			x					
18:22-29	x							
19:1-10							x	
19:28-40	x	x	x					
19:29-44	x			x				
22-24		x						
22:7-23							x	
23:1-24:12	x							
24:13-35	x	x						
24:44-49			x					
44-46								x
John								
Book of John								x
1:1						x	x	
1:1-8	x							
1:10		x						
1:15-50		x						
2:1-12	x				x			
3:16			x					
3:16-17		x						
3:22-30				x				
4:1-42		x						
4:42			x					
4:46-54		x						
5:1-15		x						
6:1-15			x					
6:33	x							
6:35		x						
8:1-11								x
8:12					x			
8:31-36		x						x
9:5					x			
10:11-16		x						
11:1-44								x
12:12-19	x							
12:12-21:5		x						
12:47					x			
13		x						
13:31-35					x		x	
13:31-38	x							
14:1-14				x				

Key Bible texts, continued

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7-8
15:1-4	x			x				
15:9-17								x
15:11	x							
16:7	x							
16:24			x					
17-20	x							
18:15-18					x			
18-20				x				
18:25-27							x	
19:1-20:18				x				
20:1-19		x						
20:19-23	x			x				
20:24-29				x				
21:1-19			x					
Acts								
Book of Acts				x				
2:1-4								x
2:14-42			x					
2:43-47				x				
3		x						
3:1-10				x				
4	x							
5:17-42				x				
6				x				x
7				x				
7:17-34				x	x			
7:54-60			x					
8				x				
8:1-4							x	
8:4-40				x				
8:26-40			x					
9:1-22		x						
9:1-32						x		
9:36-42				x	x			
10			x					
10-12							x	
14:19-20				x				
15					x			
15:6-21							x	
16:1-5	x							
16:11-15		x						
16:16-40	x							
17-18					x			
21-28		x						
Romans								
1:25					x			
4								x
6:1-14								x
8:19-25, 28								x
8:35-39	x							
12:1-5, 9-21		x						
12:3-88								x
14:1-15:13		x						
1 Corinthians								
3		x						
6								x
9:24-27								x
10:13								x
12:4-6								x

Key Bible texts, continued

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7-8
12:12-31	x							
15:3,4	x							
2 Corinthians								
2:7					x			
5:17	x							
Galatians								
Book of Galatians		x						x
1:10						x		
2:16a								x
3:26-28								x
5:14-15		x						
5:22-23		x						
Ephesians								
Book of Ephesians	x							
1:4				x				
2:10								x
4								x
4:7-8								x
4:11-16	x							
4:32	x							
4:25	x							
5		x						
5:19-20								x
6:1-4		x						
Philippians								
Book of Philippians	x							
4:8-9						x		
Colossians								
Book of Colossians								x
3:12-17						x		
3:13		x						
1 Thessalonians								
Book of 1 Thessalonians	x							
2 Thessalonians								
Book of 2 Thessalonians						x	x	
1 Timothy								
Book of 1 Timothy						x		
2 Timothy								
Book of 2 Timothy		x						
3:16-17		x				x		
Titus								x
Philemon								
Hebrews								
11:1-3					x			
11:8-26								x
12:1			x					
James								
The Book of James								x
2:8								x
1 Peter								
2:4-10		x						
4:10		x						
2 Peter	x							
1 John								
2 John								
5	x							
6	x							
3 John	x							
Jude								
Revelation								
Book of Revelation						x		

JOURNEYS WITH GOD MEMORY PASSAGES

KINDERGARTEN

Unit 1: Psalm 139:14; Isaiah 43:4 **Unit 2:** 1 Corinthians 12:27
Unit 3: Proverbs 20:11; 2 Timothy 2:15 **Unit 4:** 1 Peter 4:10;
2 Corinthians 9:7 **Unit 5:** Galatians 5:22,23; Luke 6:43 **Unit 6:**
Luke 2:11; Matthew 1:23 **Unit 7:** Luke 2:40; Deuteronomy 6:4-6;
Psalm 46:1 **Unit 8:** Matthew 3:17; Psalm 34:4; Mark 1:7 **Unit 9:**
Luke 6:31; Deuteronomy 6:18a; John 13:34 **Unit 10:** Jeremiah
7:23; Ephesians 6:1-3 **Unit 11:** Colossians 3:13; Proverbs 17:17a
Unit 12: Matthew 28:6a; John 14:1; John 14:6-7 **Unit 13:**
Genesis 1:1; Amos 4:13; Psalm 24:1-2; Psalm 19:1

FIRST GRADE

Unit 1: Matthew: 22:37-39; Matthew 5:9; Luke 6:31 **Unit 2:**
Psalms 133:1; 1 Peter 2:5; 1 Peter 2:9 **Unit 3:** Isaiah 45:22;
Galatians 6:10; John 3:16,17 **Unit 4:** Luke 3:11; John 1:23;
Psalm 27:14; Isaiah 40:31 **Unit 5:** Luke 2:10-11; Luke 1:46-48;
Unit 6: Jeremiah 7:23; Psalm 78:1; Deuteronomy 6:4,5; Psalm
100:1-3 **Unit 7:** Psalm 4:6; Matthew 5:16; John 8:12; Psalm 27:1
Unit 8: Matthew 6:9-13; 2 Corinthians 5:15; Psalm 147:1 **Unit**
9: Psalm 103:8; Proverbs 3:3 **Unit 10:** Genesis 8:22; Psalm
9:1,2; Isaiah 54:10 **Unit 11:** Hebrews 10:23; Psalm 37: 3,4;
Psalm 37:5,6; Exodus 15:2 **Unit 12:** Psalm 25:1,2; Psalm 25:4;
Nahum 1:7 **Unit 13:** Genesis 28:15; Isaiah 41:10; Ephesians
4:25-27 **Unit 14:** Psalm 126:3; Luke 6:27,28; Micah 7:18,19

SECOND GRADE

Unit 1: Genesis 17:6,8; Genesis 28:13b,14; Genesis 28:15
Unit 2: Exodus 3:14; Exodus 3:14,15 **Unit 3:** Exodus 15:2;
Exodus 15:21 **Unit 4:** Exodus 20: 1-5a; Exodus 24:3,7; Leviticus
26:11,12 **Unit 5:** Leviticus 23:3 **Unit 6:** Psalm 136:1,2; 10-16; 26
Unit 7: Deuteronomy 4:39,40; Philippians 4:7 **Unit 8:** Ruth 1:16b
Unit 9: Luke 2:7-16 **Unit 10:** Isaiah 11:1,2a; Isaiah 9:6;
Matthew 4:19 **Unit 11:** Luke 19:10 **Unit 12:** Matthew 22:34-40;
Luke 6:27,28; John 13:34,35; 1 John 4:7,8; 1 John 4:11,12 **Unit 13:**
Zechariah 9:9-10; John 3:16,17; Matthew 23:37-39 **Unit 14:**
Matthew 28:18-20 **Unit 15:** Matthew 25:34-40; 1 John 3:16-19;
Hebrews 13:16 **Unit 16:** Acts 1:8

THIRD GRADE

Unit 1: Deuteronomy 28:9-11; Exodus 19:5,6a; Psalm 32:8;
Psalm 67:1-4; Psalm 9:1,2; 7-10; Joshua 24:15b; Psalm 130:5;
Psalm 143:8b; Psalm 139:23,24; Psalm 121 **Unit 2:** Mark 10:27;
Judges 8:22-23 **Unit 3:** Psalm 32:8a; 1 Samuel 2:2 **Unit 4:**
Psalm 24 **Unit 5:** 1 Samuel 16:7b; Psalm 51:1,2; 10-12; Psalm
121 **Unit 6:** John 3:16,17 **Unit 7:** Psalm 42:1-3,5; John 14:27
Unit 8: Galatians 5: 13-15; Galatians 6:7-10 **Unit 9:** Psalm
119:33,34 **Unit 10:** Psalm 27: 1,2, and 5; Psalm 67:1-5 **Unit 11:**
Matthew 3:16,17 **Unit 12:** Luke 8:4-8; Luke 8: 11-15 **Unit 13:**
Acts 4:19-20 **Unit 14:** Matthew 5:43,44 **Unit 15:** Ephesians 4:1-
6; 4:29-5:2; 5:19,20; 6:1-4 **Unit 16:** Isaiah 43:1-3a; Matthew
5:43,44; John 14:6

FOURTH GRADE

Unit 1: Micah 6:8b; Matthew 7:13-14; Genesis 15:1; Genesis
9:12-16; Exodus 6:6-8; 1 Samuel 2:2 **Unit 2:** 1 Samuel 8:10-18;
1 Samuel 8:7-9; 1 Samuel 12:12 **Unit 3:** 1 Samuel 12:24-25;

1 Samuel 15:22,23 **Unit 4:** portions of Psalm 145; Psalm 32;
Psalm 150; psalm of student's choice **Unit 5:** Psalm 32;
Proverbs 22:17-19; Acts 17:24-28a **Unit 6:** Luke 12:22b-26; Luke
12:27-31; Luke 12:32-34 **Unit 7:** Isaiah 7:14; Isaiah 9:6; Isaiah
53:3-6 **Unit 8:** Isaiah 9:2; Isaiah 40:1-5; Jeremiah 33:14-16;
Micah 6:8 **Unit 9:** Matthew 20:26-28; Philippians 2:5-11; Psalm 1
Unit 10: Psalm 119:32; John 8:12; John 8:31,32; John 8:34-36
Unit 11: Matthew 16:13-16; John 20:30-31; Acts 2:36; 1 Corinthians
15:3,4 **Unit 12:** John 12:12-19; John 12:23-28; John 14:1-4;
John 14:15-21; John 19:16b-22 **Unit 13:** Deuteronomy 6:4,5; 2
Corinthians 12:10; Philippians 4:12-13; Philippians 1:12-14;
John 8:31-32 **Unit 14:** Micah 6:8

FIFTH GRADE

Unit 1: Genesis 3:8,9; Psalm 139:1-4 **Unit 2:** Psalm 32:8;
Hebrews:11:8-10; Hebrews 11:13-16 **Unit 3:** Hebrews 11: 20-
22; Genesis 50:19-20 **Unit 4:** Psalm 70:4,5; Psalm 103:6-8;
Exodus 3:13,14 **Unit 5:** Exodus 20:1-12 (Ten Commandments);
Exodus 20:2; Psalm 90:1,2; Habakkuk 2:20 **Unit 6:** Hebrews
4:15,16; Matthew 6:13; Joshua 1:8,9; Joshua 24:14b-16a **Unit 7:**
Psalm 23; Psalm 78:70-72; 1 Corinthians 1:26-29; Psalm 150
Unit 8: Jeremiah 31:31-34; Psalm 18:31; Deuteronomy 10:17,18;
Psalm 34:18 **Unit 9:** John 1:1-3, 10-12; John 1:14; John 20:30-31
Unit 10: 1 Corinthians 15:3-5; one of the following: John 20:1-9;
John 20:10-18; John 20:19-23; John 20:24-31 **Unit 11:**
Revelation 1:8; Revelation 21:3,4; Revelation 22:12,20

SIXTH GRADE

Unit 1: Lamentations 3: 21-24; Psalm 130 **Unit 2:** Isaiah
55:1,2;6-12; **Unit 3:** Psalm 95:1-6; Psalm 24:1-4; Psalm 8 **Unit 4:**
Zechariah 4:6b; Zechariah 7:9,10; Nehemiah 9:5b,6 **Unit 5:**
Nehemiah 1:5,6a; James 5:13; Ephesians 5:19,20 **Unit 6:** Isaiah
9:6,7; Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 5:43-45 **Unit 7:** Review **Unit 8:** Luke
4:17-20; James 5:16 Unit 9: Matthew 5:3-11 **Unit 10:** John
11:25,26; Luke 24:36a-39 **Unit 11:** 1 Peter 2:9-10; Matthew
28:18-20 **Unit 12:** portions of Mark

SEVENTH AND EIGHTH GRADES

Anabaptist History: Hebrews 12:1; Matthew 5:39; Galatians
2:16a; Acts 5:29; Luke 17:20,21; 1 Corinthians 3:11; Luke 23:24;
Matthew 10:19,20; Matthew 10:39; John 17:22,23; Matthew
28:20b; Mark 16:15; Psalm 3:3; Galatians 3:28; Romans 12:21;
Matthew 7:13,14 **Creative Bible Study:** Luke 1:76-79; Luke
4:18,19; Luke 6:20-31; Luke 24:44-49; 2 Timothy 3:16,17; Psalm
119:105-112 **Practical Christian Living:** Short passages
include: James 1:2-4; 1:5-8; 2:8-9; 2:26; 3:7-10; 3:13; 3:17-18;
4:11-12; 4:17; 5:7-8; 5:12; 5:15-16; 5:19-20. Longer passages
include: James 1:12-16; 1:19-26; 2:1-13; 2:14-26; 3:1-12; 3:13-18;
4:1-10; 4:13-17; 5:7-11; 5:13-18 **Have I Got News for You!:**
Deuteronomy 18:15-22; 2 Peter 1:20-2:3 and 3:1-2 **Acts 29!:**
Acts 4:12; Psalm 16:8-11; Galatians 3:25-28; Romans 5:1-5; 1
Corinthians 13 **At the Crossroads:** Jeremiah 6:16; Psalm 139;
Romans 12:1-21; The Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-14 and Luke
11: 2-4) **Images of God:** Job 10:9a; Genesis 1:27; Colossians
1:16; John 1:1-14; Matthew 5: 14-16; 1 John 1:5-9; 1 John 2:9-11

Overview of Content Strands and Lessons

- The content strand title and lesson title are at the top of the page for middle school, grades seven and eight. For elementary school, from kindergarten through grade six, the unit title and lesson title are at the top of the page.
- A clear **Objective** is listed at the beginning of the lesson. This will usually include the corresponding scripture.
- The **Estimated Time** is listed next. This includes the bulk of the main lesson. Any extended activities will take extra time.
- The **Teacher Preparation** section gives step-by-step instructions on any work that will need to be done early. This includes everything from making copies of student pages to cutting construction paper to a specific size.
- The **Materials** section lists all materials, including anything not listed in the teacher preparation information.
- Children are prepared for the lesson through **Introducing the Lesson**. This section builds anticipation for the lesson.
- **Lesson Steps** give a clear, concise description of how the lesson will proceed.
- The **Extend the Lesson** section includes extra ideas the teacher may want to do in place of the student pages or to support the lesson further.
- Most lessons include one or more **Student Pages** for student response to the lesson.
- The footer at the bottom of each page will list the name of the unit and the name of the strand for middle school, and the name of the unit and the name of the lesson for elementary grades.

Statement of Theology

J. Nelson Kraybill, pastor and theologian, developed the foundational framework on which these materials are built. The seeds of this project began in Mennonite elementary schools.

We are Anabaptists. The term *Anabaptist* is often mistakenly interpreted to mean “against baptism.” In fact, this group of people was often referred to as the “Rebaptizers,” because they believed that a person should be baptized when old enough to make a conscious decision to follow Christ—in other words, to “count the cost.” Those who know of our beginnings during the Reformation know that the Anabaptist movement began when Conrad Grebel baptized George Blaurock.

If you are from an Anabaptist tradition, you are familiar with the term *Anabaptist*. If you are from another tradition, please try to move beyond the images that one word might evoke.

The following materials provide a description of the theology that undergirds what you will teach, as well as how the curriculum was developed. They have been adapted from the work of J. Nelson Kraybill, and are included with gratitude.

The Anabaptist Prism

How do Anabaptists read the Bible? Our intention is to let the Scriptures speak directly to us as the Word of God, without relying on creeds or theological formulas. Since the Bible is our guide, Anabaptists have never developed the elaborate confessions of faith and systematic theologies common in other traditions. One does not have to look far in the Christian church, however, to see that the Bible is interpreted in many different ways. Even on basic issues such as the meaning of baptism or the use of force, sincere Christians differ in their understanding of what the Bible means.

Journeys with God is a response to these differences in interpretation. The material in this series is specifically designed to reflect the best of Anabaptist understandings and to view the light of God’s written Word through this Anabaptist prism.

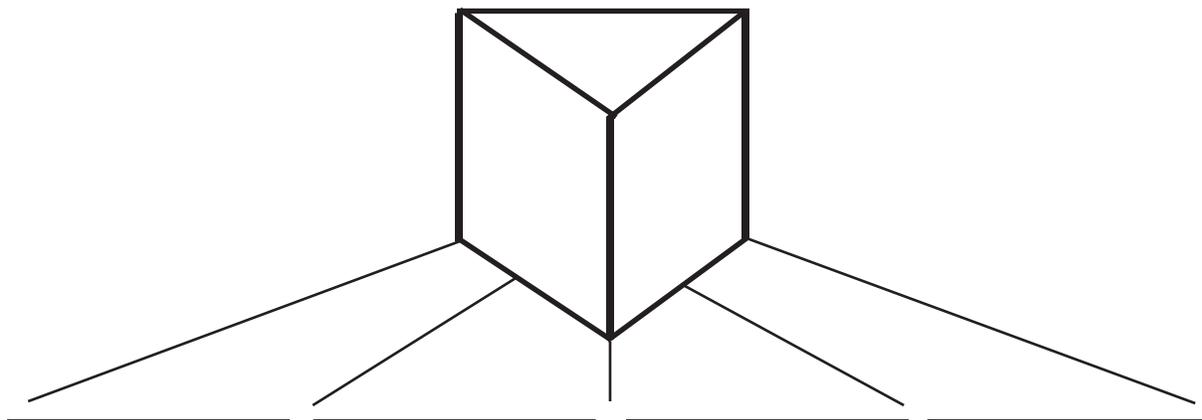
A good prism allows all light to pass through it, then splays that light in a full spectrum of true colors. The aim of this curriculum is to present the full range of biblical truth, without distortion. No prism should be used to tell the Bible what it must say. We believe God has worked through our Anabaptist forbears to effect understandings that are valid and true to his Word. We want to accept and build on these understandings and help keep this heritage vital.

The prism diagram on page 19 highlights four areas that give Anabaptist theology a unique hue: Our **confession** centers on understanding God through Jesus Christ; our **values** pivot on relationships of love and service; the **context** of our worship and ministry is the faith community; and the **content** of our theology springs from the Scriptures.

Anabaptist theology emphasizes relational aspects of faith. Through Christ, we are reconciled to God and begin to live in right relationship to other persons and to the physical world around us. We belong to a believing community that is shaped by biblical principles. All of this underscores a conviction that correct belief must be followed by a life of faithful obedience.

The prism diagram briefly explains the four areas emphasized in this curriculum. The following pages discuss each area in full and describe the themes that emerged.

The Anabaptist Prism



Confession

God offers reconciliation and shows us how to live in obedience.

We are created in God's image, but disobedience disrupts our relationship with God and with each other. In Old Testament times, God offered reconciliation to men and women when they confessed their sin and made acceptable sacrifice. In the New Testament era, persons who confess their sin come into right relationship with God through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Jesus' life shows us how to live in love and obedience; his death on our behalf opened the way for our reconciliation to God. The Holy Spirit enables those who confess Christ as Lord to live as children of God.

Content

The Bible is God's written Word, an authoritative and trustworthy guide for faith and life.

The Bible is God's written Word, reliable as a guide for life and as a rule for the church community. While we believe the fullest revelation of God's love comes with Jesus Christ in the New Testament, we also read the Old Testament as the story of God's mercy and love.

Believers need to know Bible stories and understand the culture of biblical times. Knowledge of biblical chronology, geography, and political history is important. Believers should recognize different literary types in the Bible and commit important passages to memory.

Context

God uses the believing community to make right relationships practical.

People who confess Jesus as Lord join the faith community for worship, service, and mutual sharing of life. Here, in tangible ways, we experience forgiveness and are accountable to each other under Holy Spirit guidance. Together we stand apart from values and activities of the world that are contrary to God's will.

Individuals become church members after a mature, voluntary decision to accept Jesus as Lord. Baptism, communion, foot-washing, and other symbols remind us of God's transforming presence and our call to obedience.

In addition to worship, a central task of the church is to share the good news of salvation.

Values

God wants his people to live in right relationships.

The cross and resurrection of Christ make possible our right relationship with God. The cross also illustrates the high price we are willing to pay as we model non-violent love, forgiveness, and humble service. Like Jesus and the prophets, we have a deep concern for those who suffer abuse, poverty, and other forms of oppression. God calls us to live in harmony with his creation and to be agents of reconciliation in a broken world.

God wants his people to live in right relationships. God created humans to live in right relationship with God, with the physical world, and with each other. From the garden of Eden in Genesis to the New Jerusalem in Revelation, we see God's desire for harmony in creation. God intends for humans to enjoy the physical world, experience love, and find meaningful work.

Children are born innocent, created in God's image. But as humans come into the age of accountability, we disobey God and abuse relationships. The Bible is the saga of humans breaking their relationship with God through disobedience, and God's gracious efforts to reestablish trust and communication. Sin is not merely an act of breaking rules. It is also selfish action that severs or damages relationships that we need to be whole persons. God forgives those who seek him and offers reconciliation through the witness of Scripture, through the faith community, and through the Holy Spirit.

We celebrate the forgiveness, healing, and material blessings we receive from God. Our view of discipleship, however, precludes the idea that health and wealth are signs of right relationship with God. Church history includes many examples of Christians who lost health and wealth because of obedience to the way of the cross.

God offers reconciliation and shows us how to live in obedience. The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus represent God's supreme effort to bring humans into right relationship with him. Hope for a world of broken relationships starts with the inner change that happens when people acknowledge their sin and direct their lives in obedience to God's will. Young children can be assured of God's unqualified acceptance. As they mature, they gradually need to understand and experience confession and repentance. Our deepest desire is for our children, at the age of accountability, to confess Christ as Savior and Lord.

We believe that Jesus died on the cross for our sins, and is our Savior. We also stress that Jesus is Lord of our daily lives. Jesus calls us to follow in practical ways the humility, forgiveness, and love that he modeled.

Jesus often echoed the Hebrew prophets in expressing God's dismay at greed, immorality, and violence. Because of God's concern for healing relationships, we refuse to participate in violence, whether personal or national. Recently, we have become more aware of violence manifested by unjust economic systems, sexism, racism, and nationalism. Our commitment to Christ impels us to address these problems and to serve as agents of reconciliation.

Obedience to Jesus Christ supersedes obedience to all other authorities. We pray for rulers and respect those who lead our nations. But we believe that sometimes governments or other institutions ask us to engage in tasks that displease God. In such cases, we are ready to follow Christ regardless of the cost. Symbols are important to us. We scrutinize carefully symbolic actions such as saluting the flag and celebrating patriotic holidays. We are first of all disciples of Christ, then citizens of the world and of our own countries—in that order.

God uses the believing community to make right relationships practical. Participation in the worshipping community of God's people is an integral part of what it means to be saved.

Salvation happens here and now as humans experience the joy of forgiveness, worship, and service in the life of the faith community. The kingdom of God already has begun in the new fellowship of people who call Jesus Lord and who are guided by the Holy Spirit.

While salvation has important meaning for life after death, it also has immediate and tangible benefits as we share in the life of God's people on earth. A central task of the church is to share the good news of salvation and to invite others to accept Christ as Savior and Lord.

Discipleship to Jesus means that members of the church live out values and actions that often differ from those accepted by larger society. Jesus calls us to lead lives uncluttered by materialism and untainted by a drive for personal success or popularity. Use of our time, possessions, and gifts should honor God and respect the needs of others.

Accountability is a key concept in our view of the church. We "bear each others' burdens," give and receive counsel, and disciple one another. For us, church is a community of love, worship, and obedience. It is not merely an event sponsored by the clergy.

The Holy Spirit convicts individuals of sin and calls them to repentance. Persons become baptized members of the church after making a mature, voluntary decision to accept Christ as Lord. We do not baptize infants; we baptize individuals only when they are sufficiently mature to understand the cost of discipleship.

All members of the church are priests before God, and all members serve one another. We recognize differing roles within the church, but do not exaggerate the authority of administrators and pastors. We minimize the use of titles and emphasize shared leadership.

Baptism, communion, foot-washing, and other symbolic actions take place in the context of the community. These serve as reminders of God's transforming presence and call to obedient response.

The Bible is God's written Word, a reliable guide for faith and life. The Bible contains knowledge necessary for salvation, serves as a guide for life, and provides a trustworthy rule for the church community.

It is urgent for individual believers to know the Bible and to be nurtured by it regularly. Bible interpretation is always subject to discernment by the church as a whole, under Holy Spirit direction.

The teachings of Jesus play a central role in Anabaptist theology. We believe that Christ's teaching about the kingdom of God provides a practical model that believers live out here and now. Though we await full realization of the kingdom of God in the future, we desire to live by its standards today.

While our faith centers on Jesus Christ of the New Testament, we also read the Old Testament as the story of God's gracious acts of love and mercy. The "gospel" of the Old Testament includes God's deep concern for human suffering, repeated forgiveness, and formation of a healing community.

Introduction to Second Grade: *A Place to Belong*

General Introduction

UNDERSTANDING THE CHILD

Children at this age are thoughtful and anxious to please. They struggle with their desire to please adults and their need to be highly regarded by their peers. These children are becoming more independent as they master many physical and academic skills. They are excited about their accomplishments and often initiate challenging tasks with vigor. They need to feel accepted by others and assured of Jesus' love and forgiveness.

At this level, children are able to move beyond themselves. They are interested in learning more about the lives of others. Broadening the definition of what it means to belong will help children gain an understanding of others' lives and communities, both during biblical times and around the world today.

Through this year of study, children will see that the work of the church is the same today as it was during the time of Jesus. Although many things have changed, God is the same today as yesterday and the day before. And God will continue to be the same tomorrow.

True biblical faith is lived beyond the boundaries of the family or a particular nation. Families move to new locations, experience new ways of making a living, and encounter new customs and religions. The task of forming community is central in the themes of this grade level.

God's people are to be a light to the world, not only in our immediate surroundings, but to the global community as well. God nurtures the formation of new faith communities regardless of external situations. Persons from outside the faith community are also welcomed into God's family. In this way, God's vision for the world is fulfilled.

Second and third grades lay the foundation for biblical study in fourth through sixth grades. It is important for students to have a sense of the Exodus story as a whole. They will also benefit from an overview of Jesus' ministry and call to all persons to become part of the Christian community. No one is excluded from this invitation. God's love and grace abound. God has indeed called us to be faithful people.

COSTUMES FOR BIBLE CHARACTERS

Throughout the grades, there will be occasions where an adult or student needs to wear authentic clothing from Bible times. It is important to provide appropriate garb.

We suggest that your school keep several tunics for adults and children in a central location (coat rack in faculty lounge, nurse's closet, someone's classroom, for example), for easy access. McCalls has a pattern for children's clothing from Bible times, as well as a pattern for adults. The patterns are easy to follow and will lend an air of authenticity to the character's role.

Inexpensive cotton/polyester blends work well for tunics and headgear. Two tunics and head coverings for men, two for women,



and several for students should be adequate for a medium-sized school. Many parents who cannot help during school hours would be happy to create simple costumes. And children's concepts of the culture in which Jesus lived will be greatly enhanced.

MISSION PROJECTS

The second-grade curriculum suggests several mission and service projects throughout the course of the year. Students may have the opportunity to make cards for sick people, visit the elderly, volunteer at soup kitchens, among other possibilities. You may decide to extend some of these opportunities beyond a single lesson and make it into a year-long project. The final unit of the year focuses on the concrete ways that we can serve Christ through serving those in need. If you pick a mission and service project that your class works on throughout the year, you could celebrate with a year-end celebration of the money that students raised or the service projects that they performed (*the final lesson invites you to do just that*). Consider one of the following options:

- Mennonite Central Committee's **Global Family Program** (www.mcc.org/globalfamily) gives North Americans the opportunity to sponsor groups or individuals in other parts of the world for \$20 monthly. You would receive information about the organization or individual that your class is supporting, and your students could write letters and send small gifts to them. This partnership would give your students a sense of unique connection to people in another area of the world.
- Your class could become **Prayer Partners** for the people and ministries of Mennonite Mission Network (www.mennonitemission.net/stewardship/prayer). You would receive a monthly listing of daily prayer requests to share with your students, as well as excerpts from missionary letters via email or regular mail.
- You could develop a **relationship with an area nursing home** in which children would be matched with an elderly person. A year-long relationship with someone, with students visiting him/her several times a semester, would be more meaningful for children than simply one visit at Christmas or Easter.
- Look into Heifer Project International's **"Read to Feed" program** (www.readtofeed.org), in which children are "inspired to read more books for pleasure, while raising money, through sponsored reading, to help end world hunger and improve the environment." The website contains countless activities, resources, coloring pages, and ideas for classroom use. Your students could do a fundraiser to buy animals (*such as honeybees, sheep, pigs, etc.*) for a family, which would produce both food and income and possibilities for education.
- Look into receiving Mennonite Central Committee's bimonthly **Hello! brochures** for your students. Each issue of this brochure profiles a child from a different country and includes games, photos, craft ideas, and maps. You could use these as a springboard for mission and giving projects, as well as to supplement Social Studies lessons. They are available free and in bulk to groups. Contact your local MCC office.

WILDERNESS BOX

The Wilderness Box is a way for you to focus children's attention on specific aspects of the Exodus journey as you tell the stories with simple props. The Wilderness Box should be a large box (*a long plastic storage box with low sides*

works well) that you will fill with various items—some items will change and others will remain the same. If you use real sand (*see below*), the box will be rather heavy, so you will want to wait to fill it at school and then find a place to store the Wilderness Box on the floor, perhaps under a desk or table, so you can simply slide it out when ready to use it.

The Wilderness Box may contain the following items (*see the Exodus lessons for several more specific items*):

- Tan bath towel, brown butcher paper, or sand to represent the wilderness
- Large rock to represent Mt. Sinai
- Blue cloth to represent the Red Sea and water in the desert
- Several wooden figures to represent Moses, Aaron, Miriam, and the Israelites

The Wilderness Box Scripts that accompany the use of the Wilderness Box are designed to tell slowly and with an emphasis on moving the props. Savor the stories as you tell them. Use varied inflections to emphasize the drama, and give the children time to reflect on the events. Feel free to tell the story several times in one sitting, if the students make such a request. Retelling stories like this helps children attend to different aspects of the story, nurtures their faith development, and lets you assess their learning based on their questions and summaries of the stories.

If it works in your classroom, it would be good for the Wilderness Box to be accessible to children throughout the year, even when you have completed the Old Testament study and moved into the New Testament units. If allowed to play with the Wilderness Box during free time, your students will find creative ways to use the wooden figures as they re-enact stories about Jesus as well. You may want to encourage them to add items to the box—their creativity might surprise you!

MAPS

Some of the Unit Information sections and lessons include maps of the region that will be discussed during that unit. You may want to make copies of these maps and pass them out to students at the appropriate times, to give them a sense of where the stories occurred. Some lessons suggest uses for the maps, but some do not, so they could be used to extend the lessons beyond the lengths of time suggested. You will probably want to have a large wall map to refer to as well.

THE CHRISTMAS WALK

The entire focus of Unit 7 is the anticipation of Christ's birth and telling the Christmas story to anyone who will listen. Each year, the second grade class or classes in your school can invite other classes to participate in the Christmas Walk. After studying the culture and topography of Nazareth and Bethlehem, your students will paint background murals and participate in scenes surrounding the Christmas story.

Imagine this: a Roman soldier (*a second grader*) reads Caesar's proclamation to a kindergarten class. The kindergarteners respond by joining the soldier, who guides them through the rocky terrain of Nazareth. Upon nearing Bethlehem, the soldier invites the weary travelers to visit the marketplace, where they see shopkeepers (*more second graders*) selling their wares. A short stop at the breadmaker's and food shops (*complete with foods similar to those Mary and Joseph would have eaten*) prepares the travelers for their entry into Bethlehem. First, they must sign their names for the census. Then they must pay their assigned taxes. As they walk through the town, they meet some excited shepherds who invite them to join

in the search for the Savior who has been born. With skepticism, the soldier allows the group to join the shepherds, and they stop at an inn to inquire. Yes, a baby has been born! Where? Why, he's lying in the stable! As the group meets the Christ child, animals, and Mary and Joseph, happy angels greet them with songs of joy and promise. With joy abounding, the hopeful travelers join the song!

The Christmas Walk can be as simple or elaborate as you choose to make it. You may decide to invite only two or three classes, or you may decide to include the entire school. Complete instructions for implementing this exciting tradition are found in Unit 7. Be as creative as you like. The children will certainly have many ideas of their own!

We realize that Christmas is an especially busy season for teachers. We recommend that you invite two or three parents to provide leadership in the planning and implementing of the Christmas Walk. You might be surprised, however, how easy it becomes to do it from one year to the next. Children in younger grades who have participated as travelers might have specific ideas as to their roles and how to make it better next year. Parents want to be involved in their children's educations, but many cannot help on a regular basis. Many, however, will be glad to contribute their gifts and talents for special events such as the Christmas Walk.

THE FESTIVAL OF STORIES

The final lesson of the final unit suggests implementing a "Festival of Stories," in which children move from story station to story station to hear about people who are serving God all over the world. Through these stories children will meet such varied characters as an Ethiopian Mennonite who was imprisoned because of his faith, a woman in New Orleans who lost her home but still reached out to help others, and a group of children in Canada who used Legos to raise money to help build a church in Thailand. It is an exciting culmination of the entire year's study, and reminds students that they belong to a global body of Christian believers who are doing wonderful and compassionate work on behalf of others. This lesson involves inviting adult volunteers to read the stories and help out at the stations, and also includes suggestions for international snacks and other extensions that you could choose to include.

The end of the school year is a busy time for teachers, however, and you can adapt and simplify this lesson to your needs and energy level. A basic Festival of Stories could mean simply inviting older children from other classes to read the stories to your students. Pick and choose from the suggestions included in this lesson, and know that however you end up using the stories, they are sure to challenge and inspire both you and your students to imagine possibilities for service in the world.

CHILDREN'S BIBLE STORYBOOKS

Perhaps the most important step in "Teacher Preparation" for each lesson is preparing to tell or read the Bible story. You can do this in a variety of ways—reading directly from the Bible, retelling in your own words or from one character's point of view, reading from a children's Bible storybook (*see suggestions below*), having several students act out the text, creating readers theater or responsive readings, having children pantomime the story as you read it, inviting them to call out or repeat key words in the story, etc. Lessons sometimes suggest a specific way to tell the story for that day, but most leave it up to you to decide. It is probably best to use a variety of storytelling methods throughout the year. Toward the end of the year, lessons more frequently encourage you to invite students to look

up the lesson texts in their own Bibles to give them a chance to practice their growing Bible reference skills. In those cases, you will probably want to simply read the text directly from the Bible, or ask a student volunteer to do so.

No matter which method you choose, this step of preparing to tell or read the story is exceedingly important, as it can greatly determine your students' impressions of the biblical text. Is the Bible a basically boring book, with really big words that no one explains to them? Or is it a living, breathing text that contains fascinating stories and important words for us today? Tone of voice, facial expressions, body movement, eye contact, and most importantly your own familiarity with the text can all help students to respond enthusiastically to the stories they hear. Such positive early engagement with the Bible can set the stage for lifelong appreciation of biblical texts.

Here are some suggestions for children's Bible storybooks you might use:

God Gives the Land by Eve MacMaster. Herald Press: 1983

God Rescues His People by Eve MacMaster. Herald Press: 1982

God's Suffering Servant by Eve MacMaster. Herald Press: 1987

Tomie dePaola's Book of Bible Stories by Tomie dePaola. Penguin Young Reader's Group: 2002

WORSHIP

Teachers incorporate worship into their classrooms in different, meaningful ways. Therefore, the worship component in this curriculum can be used in a number of ways.

At the beginning of each unit, several suggestions for worship will be given. Each of these worship sections contains ideas for symbols to place on a worship table. **You may want to consider creating such a worship table** in your classroom that can be the center of your students' worship experience throughout the year. Some elements you may want to leave on the table throughout the entire unit: perhaps a cross, a figure of Jesus, or a plant. Other elements can then be added for each lesson, as suggested in the worship section; these would remain only until the end of the unit.

If you choose to use tablecloths, you could change their color according to the season of the church year. Changing the color of the tablecloth can provide a visual signal to students that they are entering a different season of God's story. One resource to help children understand the change of colors is the book *Colors I See in Church* by Julie Stiegemeyer. It is written for preschoolers, but might help to introduce the idea of seasons of the church year.

Suggested colors:

September through beginning of Advent: green

Advent: blue

Christmas through Epiphany (January 5): white

Epiphany through Ash Wednesday: green

Lent (Ash Wednesday through Easter): purple

Easter through Pentecost (50 days after Easter): white

Pentecost through end of school year: green

A sample worship time follows, with specific suggestions appearing in each of the Unit Information sections:

Worship Table: Focus students' attention by gathering around or in front of the worship table. You might want to do one simple thing to focus their attention:

light a candle, ring a bell three times, or sing a song quietly. You could then place the symbol for that day's lesson on the worship table or invite a student to do so (*if you've already done the lesson—if not, simply review the symbols from previous lessons that are already on the table, along with what the symbols show us about God's character*).

Songs: Sing songs that your students love, related to the unit or not. Each worship section contains suggestions for songs to sing during that unit, and the text and music to several songs are included at the end of each Unit Information section. There are numerous excellent songbooks or hymnals that you might want to have on hand, and which are sometimes referred to in the Worship section, including:

Chatter with the Angels: An Illustrated Songbook for Children, Linda S. Richer and Anita Stoltzfus Breckbill, ed. GIA Publications: 2000

Hymnal: A Worship Book. Mennonite Publishing House: 1992

Sing the Journey (Hymnal: A Worship Book Supplement 1). Faith & Life Resources: 2005

Jubilee Songbook and CD. Faith & Life Press and Herald Press: 1998. *If this is unavailable, check with the kindergarten and first grade teachers. They may have a copy that you may borrow.*

There are also several wonderful CDs of children's songs that you may want to have on hand:

Can't Keep Quiet by Bryan Yoder Suderman (2005), available through Provident Bookstores

Let It Flow Through You by Road Less Travelled (Doug and Jude Krehbiel). Available from Mennonite Media.

Scripture: Worship is a great time to help students learn the memory verses from the current unit, to work on or simply read bonus verses, or to review past memory work. Each unit's memory verse section includes suggestions for motions or special ways to help students remember it. You could also simply read some of the key Bible texts suggested at the beginning of each unit, or choose a Psalm to read or have a student read. Other ideas: have one student bring a Bible verse to share with the class each day, create a choral reading from a favorite passage, or read a Psalm and invite students to make up free movements or hand motions.

Sharing: Have students share praises and prayer requests, or create whatever routine feels comfortable for your group. One way to organize this is to use the Daily Examen, a prayer routine that comes from Ignatian spirituality. The idea is to, in your mind, walk through the previous day with God, remembering moments of both gratefulness and difficulty, and then to ask God to be with you during the next 24 hours. Realizing that God is with us in the seemingly insignificant activities and feelings of our day can help students deepen their trust in a personal, loving God. Sample prompt questions:

1. What are you most thankful for during the past day? What made you happiest today? What made today special?
2. What are you least thankful for during the past day? What made today hard? What made you sad or angry?
3. How would you like God to be with you during the day ahead? What would you like to ask God to help you with?

There are several ways to engage students in this process: ask them to think about the answers silently, invite a few students to respond to each question, or ask one student to volunteer to respond to all three questions. You could even have students write or draw responses to the three questions. However you choose to use this time, the important thing is that students begin to feel comfortable sharing their joys and concerns with each other and with God.

Prayer: Use whatever form of prayer fits your class—or the mood of your group on a particular day. The examen leads nicely into a prayer time, in which the teacher or students mention the joys and concerns the students voiced. Sometimes the prayer time could be a song or a poem or a “popcorn” prayer, in which students say just one word of something they’re thankful for or the name of someone who needs prayer. This could be a valuable time to help students expand their definitions of how to talk to God: that prayer doesn’t require folded hands and closed eyes (*although those can help us focus on God*), but that God listens to us no matter how we talk to God.

PARENT NEWSLETTERS

At the beginning of each unit, immediately after the Unit Information, you will find a newsletter to give to parents as you begin each unit. This newsletter is a way for you to let parents know what their children are learning this year in Bible, as well as to invite them to extend these ideas at home. Each unit newsletter includes the following sections:

Overview: Introduces parents to the stories and concepts of the unit. It is intentionally not detailed, to give you the freedom to pick and choose the elements of the curriculum you want to use with your students.

Memory Verses: The memory verse for the unit is included here, and sometimes the bonus memory verses as well, so that parents can work with children on them at home.

Ideas: Offers suggestions for how parents might extend the ideas and stories you’re working with in the classroom. It includes the symbols from the worship table, so that parents can make a similar center, as well as suggested songs. This section also frequently includes suggestions for books parents can check out of the library, or other resources they might want to use at home to support what you’re doing in the classroom.

Notes: Each newsletter includes room at the bottom to write personal notes to parents or to photocopy a general note to all parents. This would also be an ideal space to use for reporting your assessments of children, especially if you have decided not to use the quizzes/tests provided but are instead using narrative assessments (*see Suggested Assessments, below*).

SUGGESTED ASSESSMENTS

At the end of each unit you will find aids to assess students’ learning. There are many other ways to assess student learning, however, and you may choose to ignore these tests in favor of another method. The Unit Information preceding each unit’s lessons suggests specific assignments in the unit ahead that could be used as more informal, authentic assessments of students’ understanding of the material.

One idea that would work well with this curriculum is to have students make Bible portfolios for their year's worth of work. The portfolios could be ring binders or large folders in which students place all of their unit worksheets, journal entries, art projects (*those are small enough*), and other assignments given during the year. Students will enjoy looking back at what they have accomplished. A portfolio presentation could accompany the final lesson of the year, to which you could invite parents and others in the school.

Another assessment option is to write a note about the child's progress for the previous unit at the end of the Parent Newsletter for the new unit.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Special needs students are children who have specific needs. These needs cover a wide spectrum, including: gifted, learning disabilities, emotional disabilities, and/or physical limitations. We have provided a variety of teaching methods, with the intention of meeting the needs of all students.

Every child should experience success while participating in the learning experiences. We want children to be excited about Bible class and look forward to these special moments together. We do recognize that you will need to tailor-fit the learning experiences around the needs of the children you teach. Each class will be different!

Children with learning disabilities may have difficulty reading some of the provided materials independently. You might want to pair that child with another student. This could begin a special new friendship, and help children learn how to work together.

When children have difficulty recalling the sequence of events within a story, you may want to invite them to provide the beginnings and endings of stories while you fill in the middle. This gives children another opportunity to hear the story while giving them a feeling of success.

As the year progresses, you will discover that some children need to hear a story several times before being asked to recall specific details. Encouraging children to retell and/or reenact stories during free time, Language Arts, and other parts of the day will reinforce those skills. The Wilderness Box provides children with many creative ways to retell stories. If your classroom uses centers, incorporate the Wilderness Box as one of the centers. Or you might assign two or three children a ten-minute stint at the story floor with the Wilderness Box. Placing play dough or clay on the table for students to make characters and retell stories is another option.

Tomie dePaola's Book of Bible Stories is quite helpful for children who have difficulty reading their Bibles. Once they discover (*with a little help from you*) that the words are exactly the same in both books, they might be willing to take more risks. Keep Bible storybooks and resource books on display or in your classroom library collection throughout the year.

Second grade is brimming with creative art projects and songs. Yes, it is important for children to retell the stories. It is also critical that children have opportunity to respond to those stories in ways that are meaningful to them. Many children who feel unsuccessful in other content area lessons will feel very successful during Bible lessons. This should be every teacher's goal.

Whole-class discussions are wonderful times to make children with special needs feel special. The child who has trouble staying on task during independent activities may likely be a good singer with an incredible memory for songs. Inviting

this child to lead singing or turn pages in a book you are reading will show that you are glad they are part of your classroom community.

Children are quite adept at discerning one another's needs. They can support, encourage, and help one another. When things are flexible enough so that students have freedom to move around and talk to one another, you may find your role diminishing. When this happens, step back and observe what is taking place. Are students learning? What are they learning? What are they teaching one another? What should happen tomorrow to extend their learning?