

Teaching the Revised Common Lectionary

FEASTING *on the* WORD

CURRICULUM



Multi-Age
Grades K-6



Welcome to *Feasting on the Word Curriculum!*

You have accepted the call to teach God's people. Teaching is an important calling and ministry. *Feasting on the Word* resources will help you fulfill your calling. You can expect these resources to help you:

- ✧ Introduce biblical stories in new and creative ways.
- ✧ Gather your community with age-appropriate learning activities.
- ✧ Challenge your learners to put their faith into action and grow in their self-understanding as Christians.
- ✧ Prepare your learners for the worship and service of God.

About Children in Grades (K)1–2

These young learners are moving out from their families to explore the worlds of school and church, and *Feasting on the Word* materials help teachers shape learning experiences that proclaim: You are welcome here! You belong to God and to this church family! Children will explore God's Word in ways that engage their senses, their emerging skills in reading and writing, and their need to learn by doing.

About Children in Grades 3–4

Third- and fourth-graders are growing in their desire to join teams and organizations, and *Feasting on the Word* materials help teachers shape learning experiences that address the many ways God's Word shapes the identity of members of the body of Christ. Older children will use their Bibles to dig into the stories of our faith. This resource will encourage their love of questions and capitalize on their desire to feel competent in their academic skills.

About Tweens

Tweens are on a journey from childhood into puberty, growing in reliance on social networks. *Feasting on the Word* materials help teachers shape learning experiences that encourage investigation of the many ways Christian faith can shape life choices. This resource will engage their expanding ability to understand abstract imagery and their love of learning by interacting with peers. Tweens will explore the biblical texts to investigate what the church teaches, wrestle with implications of Jesus' teachings, and give voice to what they believe.


About Multi-aged Children

Teachers and learners from ages five to twelve will come together to explore and connect with our faith stories. This resource is designed to encourage cooperative learning across a wide age range. Children will experience Scripture through storytelling, drama, and a variety of activities that appeal to various learning styles. Multi-Age is the perfect resource for churches that require plans for groups of learners of different ages, capabilities, and curiosities.

September 4, 2011
 FEASTING on the WORD CURRICULUM
 Grades 3–4 Resource Sheet 1

The Bible and How to Use It

The word Bible means "library." The Bible is like a little library. It has 66 books. The Bible is divided into two main sections—the Old Testament and the New Testament. Find the table of contents at the front of your Bible. The page number by each book is where that book begins.



Find the list of the 39 books in the Old Testament. They contain stories, history, law, prophecies, poems, and wise sayings. These books were written down before the time of Jesus. Long ago, the Hebrew people read these writings when they gathered to worship God. Jewish people today still use these books; Jesus knew these writings and taught about them.

The 27 books in the New Testament were written after the time of Jesus. The first four books are called Gospels. Gospel means "good news." The Gospels contain stories about Jesus and things that Jesus taught. There also are letters in the New Testament. These letters were written to early Christians. They explain what it means to follow Jesus Christ.

Bibles often include maps, pictures, and dictionaries. What is in your Bible? Be sure to look in the back of the Bible.

Decoding a Bible Reference

Matthew 18:15–20

Name of Book: Matthew Chapter Number: 18 Verse Numbers: 15–20

To find this Scripture:

- Go to the table of contents in the front of the Bible and find Matthew.
- Go to the first page of Matthew.
- Page through Matthew, looking for the number 18 at the top of the page.
- When you have found chapter 18, look at the small numbers by the lines of writing to find verse 15. This reference tells you to read from verse 15 to verse 20.

© 2011 Westminster John Knox Press

October 23, 2011
 FEASTING on the WORD CURRICULUM
 Twelfth Resource Sheet 1

Pharisees Ask a Question

Pharisee 1: Look—here's your chance; no one is talking to Jesus right now.

Pharisee 2: It would be a good time to say something to him, but why do you even want to ask the question? How long have you been studying the law?

Pharisee 3: Too many years to count.

Pharisee 2: So you would be considered an expert, then?

Pharisee 3: I am.

Pharisee 2: So you should be teaching Jesus! You must know the answer already.

Pharisee 3: That's not the point.

Pharisee 1: What is the point?

Pharisee 3: I want to know if Jesus knows the answer. After all, there are over 600 laws in the Law of Moses. Which one will he say is the most important?

Pharisee 2: We've been debating that question for years.

Pharisee 3: Exactly—let's see what Jesus has to say.

Pharisee 1: It's a tricky question.

Pharisee 3: Exactly!

Pharisee 1: Oh-h-h, very clever! Let's make Jesus join our debate whether he wants to or not!

Pharisee 3: Now you get it.

Pharisee 2: Here's your chance. Ask now.

Pharisee 3: (raises voice) Teacher, what is the most important commandment in the law?

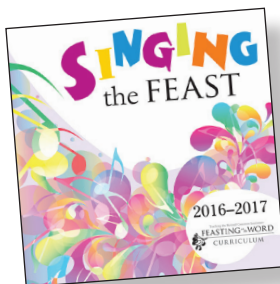
Jesus: Well now, that's a loaded question. People have been arguing about that for years! Do you really want to drag me into your endless debates? Very well—here's what I think:

© 2011 Westminster John Knox Press

Two reproducible resource sheets



Color Pack contains illustrations, photographs, game boards, patterns, maps, etc.



Singing the Feast, a collection of child-friendly and faith-inspiring songs

Preparing to Teach

- ☞ Read the focus scripture and the *Feasting on the Word* commentary excerpts.
- ☞ Read Focus on Your Teaching and pray for your group and your leadership.
- ☞ Look over the session plan. Select the activities you will use and gather necessary supplies.

Working with Young Readers

Working with a multi-age group, expect a wide range of reading and writing skills among the younger children in your class. It is likely that some children in your group are still working on learning the letters and their sounds (pre-readers) and some are able to read many simple words and sentences. Unlike learning to speak one's native language, the many basic skills that need to be in place for a child to be able to read and write must be taught. No wonder reading instruction is the key focus of the early elementary grades!

A few general things to keep in mind about children and reading:

- ✧ The many basic skills that lead to reading and writing are taught in kindergarten, first grade, and second grade.
- ✧ These basic skills must “click together” in a child's brain before he or she can read simple words and sentences. For many children, this happens near the end of kindergarten or in first grade. For some children, this happens in second grade, which is also normal. Each young learner is unique.
- ✧ Many children do not read independently and fluently until third grade.
- ✧ Children understand many more words than they are able to read.

All versions of the Bible are above second- grade reading level. The writers of *Feasting on the Word Curriculum* try to provide a way to tell the Bible story each week that will engage both pre-readers and readers.

Keep in mind that the Holy Scriptures were written for adults. Curriculum writers try to choose sections of Scripture that children can understand. Still, at times the learners in your group may seem to struggle to understand a verse or passage. When this happens, assure them that God will help them understand the Bible in new ways as they grow. Encourage a sense of wonder at God's amazing ways. Reassure them of God's love for them, a love that does not depend on what they know or understand.

Some of the following teaching strategies may enhance your time with the learners in your group:



General Ideas for Working with Young Readers

- ✪ When you write something for children to read, print. Most cannot read cursive writing.
- ✪ If there is something to read on an activity sheet, ask for a volunteer to read it aloud rather than calling on an individual child. Even better, have the group read it aloud in unison. Or, if most learners in your group are pre-readers, ask them to point to the words on the page as you read them aloud.
- ✪ Make a word chart poster. Add one church vocabulary word to learn about each week, such as: God, Jesus, love, Bible, pray, bless, thanks, disciple, praise, worship.
- ✪ Give each child a few sheets of paper folded in half and stapled to make a “word book” to keep at Sunday school. When an activity calls for children to write a word, a name, or a simple sentence, let them know you are happy to write it in their word books so they can copy it.
- ✪ Expect children this age to occasionally reverse letters (like “b” for “d”) and make errors in spelling. It is not important to correct such errors at Sunday school.
- ✪ If children need to know a repeating response for a litany or drama, write it on newsprint or a marker-board. Invite them to read it with you in unison several times before beginning the litany or drama. Adding actions to the words will help children remember them.
- ✪ Many children love learning through rhymes and songs. Try to include music in each session.
- ✪ Many children enjoy acting out stories. Invite them to act out certain parts of the story as you read it aloud. Challenge them to act out what they think happened next in a story. Some will be able to act out responses to questions more easily than writing them.
- ✪ Be careful not to hold up children for whom reading comes easily as being somehow “better.” Resist putting them in the role of teacher.
- ✪ Affirm each child by name—whatever his or her reading and writing skill level—two or three times each session.

Ideas for Working with Pre-Readers

- ✪ Keep small pieces of scratch paper handy so you can quickly write a word for a child to copy.
- ✪ If a child is struggling with an activity sheet that calls for writing a word, write the word on the sheet using dotted lines so he or she can trace it.
- ✪ Form pairs to solve puzzles. Encourage children to help one another—no need to cover their papers so others can’t copy!
- ✪ If you observe a child struggling to work independently on an activity, offer to be his or her partner. If many are struggling, work as a group to complete the activity.
- ✪ If a child seems frustrated by writing a word for an answer, suggest that he or she draw a picture of the response or act it out. You also might offer to write what the child dictates to you.
- ✪ Offer old family-friendly magazines with pictures that can be cut out and used to illustrate a response or complete a project.
- ✪ When a child is trying to sound out a word, don’t be too quick to jump in and help. Whether he or she finally decodes the word or you provide it, affirm the new skill of reading and how hard he or she is trying.

Ways of Learning and Teaching

In any group, whether children, youth, or adults, many learning styles will be present. You too have preferred ways of learning something new. The session plans include a variety of learning methods so varieties of learner styles are included during each season. We tend to teach with the methods that are most familiar to or comfortable for us. From time to time, include activities that challenge you so you are including learners who prefer to learn in that way. If you find that you tend to lead the group in verbal activities, for example, try introducing musical, bodily, and other activities suggested by the session plan.

TEAM OF WRITERS AND EDITORS

General Editor: Carol Wehrheim

Writers

Editors

Grades (K)1–2

Beth Hammond, Donna Hanby, Sharon Harding,
Cathy Hoop, Claudette Pickle

Rebecca Grothe

Grades 3–4

Edye Bender, Sharon Harding, Samantha Hassell,
Catherine Lovejoy

Rebecca Grothe

Tweens

Edye Bender, Christy Lang Hearlson, Ginny Holderness,
Mike Poteet

Rebecca Grothe

Multi-Age

Sharon Harding (summer)

Carol Wehrheim

Youth

Edye Bender, Dwight Christenbury, Carol Duerksen,
David Ealy, Michael Harper, Ashley-Anne Masters,
Mark Ray, Meg Rift, Cathie Talbot

Carol Wehrheim, Mark D. Hinds

Conversations on the Feast

Barry Ensign-George, David Gambrell, Michael Harper,
Christine Hong, Karen Russel, Donald K. McKim, Charles Wiley

Carol Wehrheim, Mark D. Hinds

Adult

Martha Bettis Gee, Margaret Krych,
Jeff Light, Scott Tunseth

Rebecca Grothe, David Maxwell

Music

Mark D. Hinds

Published by Presbyterian Publishing Corporation and Congregational Ministries Publishing.

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations in this publication are from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) of the Bible, © 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., and are used by permission. In some instances, adaptations have been made to make the language inclusive.

Every effort has been made to trace copyrights on the materials included here. If any copyrighted material has nevertheless been included without permission and due acknowledgment, proper credit will be inserted once notice has been received.

Copyright law provides an exemption for the performance or display of a portion of videos, DVDs, and other copyrighted works by instructors or participants in face-to-face educational instruction if the following stipulations are met: the video or DVD (or book) is a legal copy; it is shown in a classroom (a place devoted to instruction); it is part of the curriculum for the class; only teachers and participants may watch, and you are a nonprofit educational institution.

© 2016 Westminster John Knox Press, Louisville, Kentucky. All rights reserved. Except where permission to photocopy is expressly granted, no part of these materials may be reproduced without permission from the publisher.