



UPDATE

News and Notes About the Curriculum

Cycle B Spring Lent to Easter

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday on February 9. By the time we begin the spring quarter on March 6, we will be in the fourth week of Lent. Follow this schedule to coordinate the sessions with the season of Lent and Easter. The stories are from the gospel of Matthew.

March 6	Session 5
March 13	Session 1
March 20	Session 2
March 27	Session 3
April 3	Session 4
April 10—May 29	Sessions 6-13

Centered Teaching: B Spring

Elsie Rempel, Director of Christian Education and Nurture for Mennonite Church Canada wrote “Jesus Takes People Seriously,” a supplementary teaching resource for this quarter based on texts taken from the primary, middler, and junior youth Teacher’s Guides.

Centered Teaching is a reproducible guide that provides a multi-age approach to Jubilee. The Bible story is presented to all the children. Various response activities are offered for a broader age spectrum and/or for teachers of graded groupings who are looking for some creative alternatives to the existing session plans. Teachers use items from all three resource boxes in their sessions and are encouraged to use the student leaflets to enrich the classroom experience or to send them home as a way to encourage faith conversations with family members.

Wrap Up the Quarter

Since this material will not be reused, sort through the contents, give away leftover student leaflets, file pictures you want to keep, and dispose of the rest. Thank God for the gift Jubilee has been for the children.

Keep Jubilee Fresh

Use Wondering Questions First

One teacher had success with her class by presenting the wondering questions *before* the story to alert the children to possible learning from the story, then asking for their responses again *after* the story. She felt the discussions at the end were even richer this way.

Children Tell the Story

Invite children to tell the Bible story using Jubilee Story Figures or puppets. A week in advance, send home the story script or text from the Bible and the Story Figures. Encourage them to practice and tell the story to their classmates.

Plan Ahead for Summer Cycle E

God’s People—Surprised and Changed is the title for the summer quarter. Experience the stories of people who changed, and people who had conversions, each in a different way—Paul on the road to Damascus, Rebekah in her adventures, and Esther through courage. Invite children and adults to share their own stories of change as a result of encounters with the living Christ.

Organize your summer Sunday school in a way that meets the needs of your congregation.

1. Combine classes if attendance fluctuates.
2. Plan a simple schedule
 - Worship and story time with all the children;
 - Children choose or rotate to two or three activities.
3. Invite as many leaders as you need, with assignments to lead worship or an activity.
4. Consider using the same theme for the whole congregation. Check out the *Worship-Education Guide* which provides ideas for worship and response activities for adults and youth. To order, or for more information, contact your publisher.

What Does It Take to Teach?

It is easy to become so immersed in the day to day work of finding teachers or preparing to teach that we lose sight of the larger picture, the real ministry that is happening with children each Sunday. *Jubilee Guidebook* reminds us of five important criteria for teaching children.

#1. Love God

To share God's Story with power and conviction is a matter of an open heart and the leading of God's Spirit.

#2. Call to ministry

Teach out of a sense of call to ministry with children. If you are teaching because you have been coerced, pleaded with, shamed, bribed, or for any other less than noble reason, make an attitude adjustment. See yourself as the embodiment of God's love in action.

#3. Love for children

It is not hard to tell if a teacher enjoys being with children and cares deeply for them. Actions speak louder than words.

#4. Ability to teach

Match the skills and gifts of people with the tasks to be done. Find lay people with natural gifts for teaching children. Encourage trained teachers to serve as mentors and teachers of God's curriculum.

#5. Willingness to learn

Christians are life-long learners. As we move into the final years of *Jubilee*, now is the time to practice new teaching methods, try new things, and experiment with variety to keep the material fresh for the learners. Open yourself to the fresh winds of the Holy Spirit to guide your learning and teaching.

Two Great Resources

Speaking of learning, here are two wonderful books for teacher enrichment.

Real Kids, Real Faith. Practices for Nurturing Children's Spiritual Lives (Jossey Bass, 2004)

Karen-Marie Yust wrote this excellent book that offers inspiration and tools needed to nurture faithfulness in children. Drawing from her experience as a pastor, professor, researcher, and parent, Yust encourages parents and teachers to recognize children as capable of genuine faith. She suggests that adults provide both a religious culture and a vocabulary of faith for children in

the use of art, story books, faith talk, and acts of compassion and service.

Teaching Prayer in the Classroom. Experiences for Children and Youth. Delia Halverson (Abingdon, revised and expanded version, 2003)

One way to nurture children spiritually is to teach them how to pray. This book by a seasoned Christian educator provides practical guidance for teaching prayer. She addresses topics about prayer such as memorized and spontaneous prayers, personal and group prayers, art and music prayers, prayer and personality.

Words from God for You

God has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word.

Isaiah 50:4

*May my teaching drop like the rain,
my speech condense like the dew;
like gentle rain on grass,
like showers on new growth.
For I will proclaim the name of the Lord;
Ascribe greatness to our God!*

Deuteronomy 32:2, 3

*Go, therefore and make disciples of all nations...
teaching them to obey everything I have commanded
you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of
the age.*

Matthew 28:19, 20

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