

What Every Child Should Experience

A Guide for Leaders and Teachers in United Methodist Congregations



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 **DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRIES**
The United Methodist Church

What Every Child Should Experience

A Guide for Teachers and Leaders of Children in United Methodist Congregations

Children are born with an innate sense of wonder and faith that is genuine and real. As teachers and leaders, our role is to provide a foundation of experiences on which children build a life of learning and growth toward a mature and vital faith.

With intentional learning and Christian formation, we become the people God calls us to be. As we develop our gifts we can more faithfully encourage and guide young children through their own journey of faith.

Remember the words of Jesus,

“Let the children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the Kingdom of God belongs.” - Mark 10.14b

Keep this scripture before you, knowing that God is with us. You, and those who work with you to care for the children in your congregation and community, will form disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Scripture

“The Word of God for the People of God”

As teachers and leaders our role is to provide a foundation of experiences on which children build a life of learning and growth toward a mature and vital faith. The scripture selection in this resource is a guide, and only scratches the surface of the word of God.

Children need to experience the same Bible stories and Christian concepts at several different stages of their faith journey, because their ability to understand the concepts continues to evolve as they grow. Use this resource as appropriate in your context, and as appropriate for the development of each child.

In the early years, share the Bible in story form. As children grow, spend more time allowing the meanings of the stories to unfold through conversation and daily living.

Bible Passages for Children of All Ages

Old Testament

- The Creation
- The Ten Commandments
- The Shema
- Numbers 6:24-26
- Ecclesiastes 3
- Jonah
- Micah 6:8
- Psalms 8, 23, 100, 121

New Testament

- The Golden Rule
- The Beatitudes
- The Sermon on the Mount
- The Lord's Prayer
- The Great Commandment
- The Great Commission
- The Love Chapter
- The Magnificat
- The Fruit of the Spirit

Bibles and Books for Children

Infants and toddlers connect with stories through their senses. Bible story books and books with biblical foundations are filled with images that little ones will enjoy. There are also translations of the Bible that children will find more meaningful since they are written on a level that young learners understand.

A list of children's Bibles and books with Biblical foundations can be found at ministrywithchildren.com/childrens-books, a resource of Discipleship Ministries of The United Methodist Church.

Scripture: Newborn to 12 Months

Old Testament

- Creation.....Genesis 1
- Noah's Ark.....Genesis 6-9
- Moses and Miriam.....Exodus 2.1-10

New Testament

- Jesus' Birth.....Luke 2
- Zacchaeus.....Luke 19.1-10
- Jesus Blesses Children.....Mark 10.14-16
- Jesus' Baptism.....Matthew 3.13
- Jesus Enters Jerusalem.....Mark 11.1-11
- Lord's Supper.....Matthew 26.26-30

Scripture: 12 Months to 3 Years

Old Testament

- Creation.....Genesis 1:1-2:4
- Adam and Eve.....Genesis 2:4-25
- Joseph and His Brothers.....Genesis 37:1-28
- Pharaoh's Dreams.....Genesis 39:20-41:57
- Joseph Helps His Family.....Genesis 45:1-15; 50:15-21
- Baby Moses.....Exodus 2:1-10
- God Will Bring Peace.....Isaiah 2:1-5
- Isaiah's Call.....Isaiah 6:1-8
- A Child Called Immanuel.....Isaiah 7:10-17
- God's Peaceful World.....Isaiah 11:1-10
- Daniel and the Lions.....Daniel 6:1-28
- Jonah and the Big Fish.....Jonah 1-4

New Testament

- Jesus Is Born.....Luke 2:1-20
- Wise Men.....Matthew 2:1-12
- Escape to Egypt.....Matthew 2:13-23
- Jesus at the Temple.....Luke 2:41-52
- Jesus' Baptism.....Matthew 3:13
- Jesus Heals.....Mark 1:29-39
- The Disciples.....Matthew 4:12-23; 9:9-13; 10:1-4
- The Lord's Prayer.....Matthew 6:5-15
- The Greatest Commandment.....Matthew 22:34-46
- Jesus Blesses the Children.....Mark 10:13-16
- The Good Samaritan.....Luke 10:25-37
- Mary and Martha.....Luke 10:38-42
- Jesus Feeds Thousands.....John 6:1-14
- The Good Shepherd.....John 10:11-18
- Jesus Enters Jerusalem.....Mark 11:1-11
- The Lord's Supper.....Matthew 26:26-30
- Resurrection.....Luke 23:44-24:12
- Jesus Appears.....John 21:1-13
- What is Love.....1 Corinthians 13
- Fruit of the Spirit.....Galatians 5:16-26

Scripture: 3-4 Years

Old Testament

- Creation.....Genesis 1:1-2:4
- Adam and Eve.....Genesis 2:4-25
- The First Sin.....Genesis 3:1-24
- Noah's Ark.....Genesis 6-9
- Abram's Call.....Genesis 12:1-9
- God's Promises to Abram.....Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18
- Isaac's Blessing.....Genesis 25:19-34; 27:1-40
- Jacob Wrestles.....Genesis 32:22-31
- Joseph and His Brothers.....Genesis 37:1-28
- Pharaoh's Dreams.....Genesis 39:20-41:57
- Joseph Helps His Family.....Genesis 45:1-15; 50:15-21
- Praise God.....Psalm 8
- The Lord Is My Shepherd.....Psalm 23
- God Will Bring Peace.....Isaiah 2:1-5
- Isaiah's Call.....Isaiah 6:1-8
- A Child Called Immanuel.....Isaiah 7:10-17
- God's Peaceful World.....Isaiah 11:1-10
- Jeremiah.....Jeremiah 1:4-10
- Daniel and the Lions.....Daniel 6:1-28
- Jonah and the Big Fish.....Jonah 1-4

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New Testament

- Angels Visit..... Luke 1:26-38
- Mary Visits Elizabeth Luke 1:39-58
- Zechariah..... Luke 1:68-79
- Jesus Is Born..... Luke 2:1-20
- Wise Men..... Matthew 2:1-12
- Escape to Egypt..... Matthew 2:13-23
- Simeon and Anna..... Luke 2:22-40
- The Boy at the Temple..... Luke 2:41-52
- John the Baptist..... Matthew 11:2-11
- Jesus' Baptism..... Luke 3:15-17; 21-22
- The Lamb of God..... John 1:29-42
- Temptation..... Luke 4:1-13
- Jesus Goes to Nazareth..... Luke 4:14-30
- Teaching and Healing..... Mark 1:21-28
- Jesus Heals..... Mark 1:29-39
- The Disciples..... Matthew 4:12-23; 9:9-13; 10:1-4
- The Lord's Prayer..... Matthew 6:5-15
- The Beatitudes..... Matthew 5:1-12
- Walking on Water..... Matthew 14:22-33
- Jesus Heals Two Blind Men..... Matthew 20:29-34
- Who Is the Greatest?..... Mark 9:30-37
- Share God's Love..... Mark 9:38-50
- Jesus Blesses the Children..... Mark 10:13-16
- Zacchaeus..... Luke 19:1-10
- Jesus Feeds Thousands..... John 6:1-14
- The Good Shepherd..... John 10:11-18
- Jesus Enters Jerusalem..... Mark 11:1-11
- Lord's Supper..... Matthew 26:26-30
- Resurrection..... Luke 23:44-24:12
- Jesus Appears..... John 21:1-13
- God's Love..... 1 Corinthians 13
- Fruit of the Spirit..... Galatians 5:16-26

Scripture: 4-5 Years

Old Testament

- Creation.....Genesis 1:1-2:4
- Adam and Eve.....Genesis 2:4-25
- The First Sin.....Genesis 3:1-24
- The Burning Bush.....Exodus 3:1-15
- Free from Slavery.....Exodus 5:1-6:13
- The Red Sea.....Exodus 14:1-30
- Manna, Quail, and Water.....Exodus 16:1-18; 17:1-7
- The Ten Commandments.....Exodus 20:1-17
- A Message from God.....Deuteronomy 6:1-9
- The Battle of Jericho.....Joshua 6:1-20
- Deborah.....Judges 4:1-5:31
- Naomi and Ruth.....Ruth 1:1-22
- Ruth and Boaz.....Ruth 2:1-17
- Hannah Prays for a Child.....1 Samuel 1:9-27
- God Calls Samuel.....1 Samuel 3:1-20
- David Is Chosen.....1 Samuel 16:1-13
- David and Goliath.....1 Samuel 17:4-11; 32-50
- Solomon Builds the Temple.....1 Kings 6
- Elijah and the Widow.....1 Kings 17:8-16
- Elisha Feeds 100.....2 Kings 4:42-44
- Naaman Is Healed.....2 Kings 5:1-19
- Queen Esther.....Esther 2:5-18; 3:1-6; 8:1-17
- Isaiah's Call.....Isaiah 6:1-8
- A Child Called Immanuel.....Isaiah 7:10-17
- God's Peaceful World.....Isaiah 11:1-10
- Jeremiah.....Jeremiah 1:4-10
- A Good Ruler.....Jeremiah 33:14-17
- Daniel and the Lions.....Daniel 6:1-28
- Jonah and the Big Fish.....Jonah 1-4
- A Ruler from Bethlehem.....Micah 5:2-5

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New Testament

- Angels Visit.....Matthew 1:18-25, Luke 1:26-38
- Mary Visits ElizabethLuke 1:39-58
- Zechariah.....Luke 1:68-79
- Jesus Is Born.....Luke 2:1-20
- Wise MenMatthew 2:1-12
- Escape to Egypt.....Matthew 2:13-23
- Simeon and Anna.....Luke 2:22-40
- Jesus at the Temple.....Luke 2:41-52
- Jesus' Baptism.....Matthew 3:13-17
- Jesus Goes to Nazareth.....Luke 4:14-30
- Jesus, Fisher of People.....Matthew 4:12-23; 9:9-13; 10:1-4
- The Beatitudes.....Matthew 5:1-12
- Jesus Teaches about Anger.....Matthew 5:21-37
- Love Your Enemies.....Matthew 5:38-48
- The Lord's Prayer.....Matthew 6:5-15
- A StormMatthew 8:23-27
- The Greatest CommandmentMatthew 22:34-46
- Be Humble.....Matthew 23:1-12
- Jesus Blesses the Children.....Mark 10:13-16
- James and John.....Mark 10:35-45
- The Good Samaritan.....Luke 10:25-37
- Mary and MarthaLuke 10:38-42
- The Prodigal Son.....Luke 15:1-3; 11-32
- ZacchaeusLuke 19:1-10
- Jesus Feeds Thousands.....John 6:1-14
- The Good Shepherd.....John 10:11-18
- Lazarus.....John 11:1-45
- Mary Anoints JesusJohn 12:1-8
- Palm SundayLuke 19:28-40
- The Last Supper.....Luke 22:14-28
- The Day Jesus Died.....Luke 23:26-56
- The Empty TombLuke 24:1-12
- The Road to Emmaus.....Luke 24:13-35
- Doubting ThomasJohn 20:19-31
- The Great Commission.....Matthew 28:16-20

Scripture: 5-6 Years

Old Testament

- Creation.....Genesis 1:1-2:4
- Adam and Eve.....Genesis 2:4-25
- The First Sin.....Genesis 3:1-24
- Noah.....Genesis 6.9-8.22
- Abram's Call.....Genesis 12:1-9
- God's Promises to Abram.....Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18
- Abraham and Sarah's Visitors.....Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16; 18:1-15; 21:1-7
- Rebekah and Isaac.....Genesis 24; 25:19-28
- Isaac's Blessing.....Genesis 25:19-34; 27:1-40
- Jacob Wrestles.....Genesis 32:22-31
- Moses and the Burning Bush.....Exodus 3.1-12
- The Ten Commandments.....Exodus 19.16-20.21
- The Wall of Jericho.....Joshua 6.1-21
- Birth of Samson.....Judges 13.1-7, 24-25
- Deborah.....Judges 4:1-5:31
- Naomi and Ruth.....Ruth 1:1-22
- Ruth and Boaz.....Ruth 2:1-17
- Hannah Prays for a Child.....1 Samuel 1:9-27
- God Calls Samuel.....1 Samuel 3:1-20
- David Is Chosen.....1 Samuel 16:1-13
- David and Goliath.....1 Samuel 16 and 17
- Daniel and the Lion's Den.....Daniel 6
- Jonah and the Big Fish.....Jonah 1-4

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New Testament

- Annunciation Luke 1.26-38
- Jesus Presented at the Temple Luke 2.22-39
- Jesus Teaches in the Temple Luke 2.41-52
- John the Baptist Luke 3:1-18
- Baptism of Jesus Matthew 3.13-17
- Fisher of People Matthew 4.18-22
- The Beatitudes Matthew 5:1-12
- The Centurion's Servant Matthew 8:5-13
- The Sower Matthew 13:1-9; 18-23
- Walking on Water Matthew 14:22-33
- The Vineyard Workers Matthew 20:1-16
- Jesus Calms the Storm Mark 4.35-41
- The Lost Sheep Luke 15.3-7
- Loaves and Fishes John 6.1-14
- Jesus Heals Jarius' Daughter Luke 8.40-42, 49-56
- Lord's Supper Luke 22.14-20
- Resurrection Luke 23.44-24.12
- Jesus Appears John 21.1-13
- Philip and the Ethiopian Acts 8:26-40
- Saul to Paul Acts 9:1-20
- Peter and Tabitha Acts 9:36-43
- Lydia Acts 16:9-15
- Paul and Silas Acts 16:16-40
- Paul's Letters Romans 1:1-17
- Many Members, One Body 1 Corinthians 12:12-31
- Paul and the Philippians Philippians 1:1-14

Scripture: 6-7 Years

Old Testament

- Creation.....Genesis 1–2.3
- God Creates Adam and Eve.....Genesis 1.26–2.25
- Sin Enters the World.....Genesis 3
- Cain and Abel.....Genesis 4.1–16
- Noah and the Flood.....Genesis 6–9.17
- God Calls Abram.....Genesis 12.1–9
- Abram Rescues Lot.....Genesis 14
- God’s Covenant with Abram.....Genesis 15.1–6; 17.15–27
- Abraham’s Visitors.....Genesis 18.1–15
- Abraham and Isaac.....Genesis 21.1–7; 22.1–19
- Isaac and Rebekah.....Genesis 24
- Jacob and Esau.....Genesis 25.19–34; 27.1–40
- Jacob’s Dream.....Genesis 27.41–28.22
- Moses and the Burning Bush.....Exodus 3.1-12
- Moses and the Ten Commandments.....Exodus 19.16-20.21
- Joshua and the Wall of Jericho.....Joshua 6.1-21
- Birth of Samson.....Judges 13.1-7, 24-25
- Deborah.....Judges 4:1-5:31
- Naomi and Ruth.....Ruth 1:1-22
- Ruth and Boaz.....Ruth 2:1-17
- Hannah Prays for a Child.....1 Samuel 1:9-27
- God Calls Samuel.....1 Samuel 3:1-20
- David Is Chosen.....1 Samuel 16:1-13
- David and Goliath.....1 Samuel 16 and 17
- Daniel and the Lion’s Den.....Daniel 6
- Jonah and the Big Fish.....Jonah 1-4

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New Testament

- Birth of John Foretold Luke 1.5–25
- Birth of Jesus Foretold Luke 1.25–38
- Birth of John Luke 1.57–80
- Birth of Jesus Luke 2.1–20
- Jesus in the Temple Luke 2.41–52
- Baptism of Jesus Luke 3.15–22
- The Temptation of Jesus Luke 4.1–13
- Jesus Rejected at Nazareth Luke 4.16–30
- Jesus Heals Many Luke 4.31–44
- Jesus Changes Water into Wine John 2.1–11
- Jesus Calls the First Disciples Luke 5.1–11
- The Beatitudes Matthew 5.1–12
- The Greatest Commandment Matthew 22:34–46
- Be Humble Matthew 23:1–12
- Jesus Blesses the Children Mark 10:13–16
- James and John Mark 10:35–45
- The Good Samaritan Luke 10:25–37
- Mary and Martha Luke 10:38–42
- The Prodigal Son Luke 15:1–3; 11–32
- Jesus is Anointed Luke 7.36–50
- The Transfiguration Luke 9.28–36
- Jesus Sends the Seventy-Two Luke 10.1–24
- Jesus Teaches Us to Pray Luke 1.11–13; John 16.23–33
- Jesus Feeds Thousands John 6.1–14; Luke 12.22–34; 15.29–38
- Jesus Seeks the Lost Luke 15
- Jesus Our Shepherd John 10.22–30; Psalm 23
- Jesus Heals Ten Men with Leprosy Luke 17.11–19
- The Lord’s Supper Luke 22.1–23
- Jesus’ Death and Resurrection Luke 23.26–24.12
- Jesus Appears to Thomas John 20.19–31
- Jesus Appears to the Disciples John 21.1–14
- Jesus Ascends into Heaven Acts 1.1–11; Luke 24.44–53
- God Sends the Holy Spirit Acts 2.1–21
- Philip and the Ethiopian Acts 8:26–40
- Saul to Paul Acts 9:1–20
- Peter and Tabitha Acts 9:36–43
- Lydia Acts 16:9–15
- Paul and Silas Acts 16:16–40
- Paul’s Letters Romans 1:1–17
- Many Members, One Body 1 Corinthians 12:12–31
- Paul and the Philippians Philippians 1:1–14

Scripture: 7-8 Years

Old Testament

- Creation.....Genesis 1–2.4
- God Creates Adam and Eve.....Genesis 1.26–2.25
- Sin Enters the World.....Genesis 3
- Cain and Abel.....Genesis 4.1–16
- Noah and the Flood.....Genesis 6–9.17
- God Calls Abram.....Genesis 12.1–9
- Abram Rescues Lot.....Genesis 14
- God’s Covenant with Abram.....Genesis 15.1–6; 17.15–27
- Abraham’s Visitors.....Genesis 18.1–15
- Abraham and Isaac.....Genesis 21.1–7; 22.1–19
- Isaac and Rebekah.....Genesis 24
- Jacob and Esau.....Genesis 25.19–34; 27.1–40
- Jacob’s Dream.....Genesis 27.41–28.22

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New Testament

- Birth of John Foretold.....Luke 1.5–25
- Birth of Jesus ForetoldLuke 1.25–38
- Birth of John.....Luke 1.57–80
- Birth of Jesus.....Luke 2.1–20
- Jesus in the Temple.....Luke 2.41–52
- Baptism of Jesus.....Luke 3.15–22
- The Temptation of JesusLuke 4.1–13
- Jesus Rejected at Nazareth.....Luke 4.16–30
- Jesus Heals Many.....Luke 4.31–44
- Jesus Calls the First Disciples.....Luke 5.1–11
- Jesus Changes Water into Wine.....John 2.1–11
- The Beatitudes.....Matthew 5.1–12
- Jesus is Anointed.....Luke 7.36–50
- The Transfiguration.....Luke 9.28–36
- Jesus Sends the Seventy-Two.....Luke 10.1–24
- Jesus Teaches Us to PrayLuke 11.1–13; John 16.23–33
- Jesus Feeds ThousandsJohn 6.1–14; Luke 12.22–34; 15.29–38
- Jesus Seeks the Lost.....Luke 15
- Jesus Our Shepherd.....John 10.22–30; Psalm 23
- Heals Ten Men with Leprosy.....Luke 17.11–19
- The Lord’s Supper.....Luke 22.1–23
- Jesus’ Death and ResurrectionLuke 23.26–24.12
- Jesus Appears to Thomas.....John 20.19–31
- Jesus Appears to the Disciples.....John 21.1–14
- Jesus Ascends into Heaven.....Acts 1.1–11; Luke 24.44–53
- God Sends the Holy SpiritActs 2.1–21
- Philip and the EthiopianActs 8:26-40
- Saul to PaulActs 9:1-20
- Peter and Tabitha.....Acts 9:36-43
- Lydia.....Acts 16:9-15
- Paul and Silas.....Acts 16:16-40
- Paul’s Letters.....Romans 1:1-17
- Many Members, One Body.....1 Corinthians 12:12-31
- Paul and the Philippians.....Philippians 1:1-14

Scripture: 8-9 Years

Old Testament

- Jacob's Family.....Genesis 29.1–30.24
- Esau Forgives JacobGenesis 31.3; 32.1–33.20
- Joseph and His BrothersGenesis 37
- Joseph's TroublesGenesis 39
- Joseph Saves Egypt.....Genesis 40–41
- Joseph ForgivesGenesis 42–45
- Birth of Moses.....Exodus 1.1–2.10
- Moses and the Burning Bush.....Exodus 2.11–4.31
- Moses and the Plagues.....Exodus 5–10
- Passover.....Exodus 11–12
- Crossing the Red Sea.....Exodus 13.17–15.21
- God ProvidesExodus 16–17
- Ten Commandments.....Exodus 19–20

New Testament

- Birth of John ForetoldLuke 1.5–25
- Mary Visits ElizabethLuke 1.26–56
- Birth of John.....Luke 1.57–80
- Birth of Jesus.....Luke 2.1–20
- Presentation of Jesus at the TempleLuke 2.22–40
- The Wise Men.....Matthew 2
- John Prepares the WayMatthew 3.1–12
- Baptism of Jesus.....Matthew 3.13–17
- Jesus Calls the First Disciples.....Matthew 4.12–25
- The Transfiguration.....Matthew 17.1–9
- Temptation of JesusMatthew 4.1–11
- Jesus Teaches NicodemusJohn 3.1–21
- Jesus and the Samaritan Woman.....John 4.1–42
- Jesus Heals a Blind Man.....John 9
- Good Shepherd.....John 10.1–10
- Jesus Raises LazarusJohn 11.1–45
- Trial, Crucifixion, and DeathMatthew 27.11–66
- Resurrection of Jesus.....Matthew 28.1–10
- An Empty TombJohn 20.1–18
- Emmaus Road.....Luke 24.13–35
- Peter and John Heal the Lame Man.....Acts 3
- God's Servant Stephen.....Acts 6–7
- Phillip and the Ethiopian.....Acts 8.26–40
- The Conversion of Paul.....Acts 9.1–31
- Peter and Cornelius.....Acts 10
- Peter's Escape from Prison.....Acts 12

Scripture: 9-10 Years

Old Testament

- Worship in the Tabernacle Exodus 25–30 and 35–40
- Joshua and the Twelve Spies Numbers 13–14
- The Bronze Serpent Numbers 21.4–9
- Entering the Promised Land Joshua 3–4; Deuteronomy 34.1–12
- Rahab Joshua 2.6–7
- Deborah Judges 4–5
- Gideon Judges 6–8
- Samson Judges 13–16
- Ruth The Book of Ruth
- God Calls Samuel 1 Samuel 1–3
- Saul Becomes King 1 Samuel 8–11
- David and Goliath 1 Samuel 17.1–42
- David and Jonathan 1 Samuel 20

New Testament

- An Angel Visits Mary Matthew 1.18–25
- An Angel Visits Joseph Luke 1.26–38
- Birth of Jesus Luke 2
- Presentation of Jesus at the Temple Luke 2.21–40
- Jesus in the Temple as a Boy Luke 2.42–52
- Baptism of Jesus Mark 1.1–11
- Temptation of Jesus Mark 1.12–13
- Jesus Calls Matthew Mark 14.1–20
- Jesus and the Little Children Mark 10
- Jesus Heals a Paralytic Mark 2.1–12
- Jairus' Daughter Mark 5.21
- The Transfiguration Mark 9.2–10
- Jesus Calms the Storm Mark 4.35–41; James 1.12–18
- Peter's Confession Matthew 14.22–33; Mark 8.27–38
- Jesus Clears the Temple John 2.13–22
- The Widow's Mite Mark 12.44; John 3.13–22
- Zacchaeus Luke 19.1–9
- The Passion of Christ Mark 14.1–15.47
- The Resurrection of Jesus Mark 16.1–8
- Jesus Reinstates Peter John 21.15–23
- Paul's First Missionary Journey Acts 13–14
- Paul and Timothy Acts 15–16.5
- Lydia Acts 16.11–15
- Paul and Silas in Prison Acts 16.16–40
- Paul Sails for Rome Acts 27

Scripture: 10-11 Years

Old Testament

- David Becomes King 1 Samuel 16.1–13; 2 Samuel 5–7
- Nathan Rebukes David 2 Samuel 12.1–23
- Solomon’s Wisdom 1 Kings 3
- Solomon’s Temple 1 Kings 5–6
- Elijah and the Widow of Zarephath 1 Kings 16–17
- Elijah and the Prophets of Baal 1 Kings 18
- Elijah Taken to Heaven 2 Kings 2.1–18
- Naaman and Elijah 2 Kings 5
- Jonah 2 Kings 14.25
- Hezekiah Prays 2 Kings 18–19
- Three Men in the Fiery Furnace Daniel 3
- Daniel in the Lions’ Den Daniel 6
- Esther Esther

New Testament

- Birth of John Foretold Luke 1.5–25
- Birth of Jesus Foretold Luke 1.25–38
- Birth of John Luke 1.57–80
- Birth of Jesus Luke 2.1–20
- Jesus in the Temple Luke 2.41–52
- Baptism of Jesus Luke 3.15–22
- The Temptation of Jesus Luke 4.1–13
- Jesus Rejected at Nazareth Luke 4.16–30
- Jesus Heals Many Luke 4.31–44
- Jesus Calls the First Disciples Luke 5.1–11
- Jesus Changes Water into Wine John 2.1–11
- The Beatitudes Matthew 5.1–12
- Jesus is Anointed Luke 7.36–50
- The Transfiguration Luke 9.28–36
- Jesus Sends the Seventy-Two Luke 10.1–24
- Jesus Teaches Us to Pray Luke 11.1–13; John 16.23–33
- Jesus Feeds Thousands John 6.1–14; Luke 12.22–34; 15.29–38
- Jesus Seeks the Lost Luke 15
- Jesus Our Shepherd John 10.22–30; Psalm 23
- Heals Ten Men with Leprosy Luke 17.11–19
- The Lord’s Supper Luke 22.1–23
- Jesus’ Death and Resurrection Luke 23.26–24.12
- Jesus Appears to Thomas John 20.19–31
- Jesus Appears to the Disciples John 21.1–14
- Jesus Ascends into Heaven Acts 1.1–11; Luke 24.44–53
- God Sends the Holy Spirit Acts 2.1–21

Forming Disciples of Jesus Christ

Children develop in similar ways, although their development may vary according to their individual stages of cognitive, social-emotional, physical and spiritual development, learning styles, and ability levels. Remain aware that children possess different abilities at different ages. Some children may live with a disability or delay in some developmental areas while others are far beyond their years in knowledge.

Because children come to us with varying abilities and experiences, it is important to see this chart as flowing rather than absolute. It is a guide. Children need to experience the same Bible stories and Christian concepts at several different stages of their faith journey, because their ability to comprehend our story and holy living continues to evolve as they grow.

Faith Development: Newborn to 12 Months

God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My parents and caregivers represent God on earth • God loves me just as God created me
Worship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I sense the love of those in Christian community • Music helps me connect with the congregation • Church is a safe and loving place
The Bible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read me stories about God, Jesus, and people of the Bible through board books and Bible storybooks
Home & Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am loved by my family • I feel safe in my home • I am part of my parents and they are part of me
Relating Faith to Daily Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk and sing to me about God's love as we transition from one activity to another • Offer a blessing before meals
Community & The World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The people caring for me love me • I have a sense of wonder about the world
Significant Terms & Images	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love, Joy, Gift, Pray, Bible, Cross, God, Jesus, Manger
Methodist Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love, Grace, Assurance
What Teachers & Parents Provide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show children that they are loved • Provide a safe and trusting environment • Read stories and sing songs of God • Pray simple prayers for me and with me • Practice rituals that celebrate God's love

Faith Development: 1-2 Years

God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am a child of God, who loves me • My parents and caregivers represent God on earth • God loves me just as God created me
Worship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can learn simple prayers and sing along with hymns • Symbols of my faith are important to me • Worshipping with the congregation stimulates my senses and helps me feel like I belong • Church is a safe and loving place
The Bible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bible is a special book • Read me stories about God, Jesus, and people of the Bible through board books and Bible storybooks
Home & Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My family celebrates me just the way I am • My family reads stories of the Bible to me • My family demonstrates God's love through their actions
Relating Faith to Daily Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I use my senses to explore God's creation • Offer a blessing before meals • Pray with me for the people I love
Community & The World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The people caring for me love me • God cares for all creation • God wants me to care for God's creation • I have a sense of wonder about the world
Significant Terms & Images	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love, Joy, Bible, Cross, Christ Candle, Creation, Prayer, Joy, Offering, Manger, Wise Men
Methodist Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love, Grace, Assurance
What Teachers & Parents Provide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be an adult who is caring and responsive to children's needs • Help children experience trust • Read stories and sing songs of God • Pray simple prayers for me and with me • Practice rituals that celebrate God's love

Faith Development: 2-3 Years

God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can experience God's love through my family, friends, and caregivers
Worship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can sing, pray, and recognize the symbols of the church Worshipping with the congregation stimulates my senses and helps me feel like I belong Church is a safe and loving place
The Bible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Bible contains stories that are important Read me stories about God, Jesus, and people of the Bible through board books and Bible storybooks
Home & Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> My family celebrates me just the way I am My family reads stories of the Bible to me My family demonstrates God's love through their actions
Relating Faith to Daily Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guide me in play that helps me learn about others Let me help others in daily activities Offer a blessing before meals Pray with me for the people I love
Community & The World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> God wants me to care for God's creation I have a sense of wonder about the world
Significant Terms & Images	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bible, Cross, Love, Joy, Blessing, Community, Church, Christian, Manger, Wise Men, Lamb, Shepherds, Bread & Cup, Palm Leaves, Water, Ark
Methodist Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Love, Grace, Assurance, Sacraments
What Teachers & Parents Provide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasize love in the nursery and in weekday ministries Talk about God, community, and love Model love of God and neighbor Read stories and sing songs of God Pray simple prayers for me and with me Practice rituals that celebrate God's love Support the development of children's abilities and understanding of their own identity as a unique child of God Read stories, and sing songs of God Pray simple prayers for me and with me

Faith Development: 3-4 Years

God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God loves me • Jesus is the Son of God • I can experience God's love through my family, friends, and caregivers
Worship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I need a sense of belonging in the life of the congregation • I can actively participate in worship • I can learn the Christian calendar • Church is a safe and loving place
The Bible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bible helps me know how much God loves me • Read me stories about God, Jesus, and people of the Bible through Bible storybooks
Home & Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My family practices prayer and reads the Bible • My family demonstrates love of God and neighbor
Relating Faith to Daily Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guide me in play that helps me learn the fruit of the Spirit - love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control • Let me help others in daily activities • Offer a blessing before meals • Pray with me for the people I love
Community & The World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I find joy in doing good for others • I have a sense of wonder about the world • I like caring for nature
Significant Terms & Images	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love, Joy, Creation, Love of God & Neighbor, Forgiveness, Peace, Altar, Sanctuary, Cross, Bread & Cup, Palm Leaves, Water, Ark, Communion, Baptism
Methodist Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love, Grace, Assurance, Sacraments, John Wesley, Charles Wesley, Circuit Riders
What Teachers & Parents Provide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the development of children's abilities and understanding of their own identity as a unique child of God • Read stories, and sing songs of God • Pray simple prayers for me and with me • Talk about God, community, and love • Model love of God and neighbor • Practice rituals that celebrate God's love

Faith Development: 4-5 Years

God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God loves me • Jesus is the Son of God • I can experience God's love through family, friends, and caregivers • God loves everyone
Worship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can handle the Bible and hymnal appropriately • I need a sense of belonging in the life of the congregation • I can actively participate in worship • I can learn the Christian calendar • Church is a safe and loving place
The Bible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bible tells stories about how God wanted the people to live • I can learn, recite, and understand Bible passages • Read me stories about God, Jesus, and people of the Bible through Bible storybooks
Home & Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My family and I do good for others • My family helps me understand why we do good for others • My family talks to be about lessons in the Bible
Relating Faith to Daily Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guide me in play that helps me learn the fruit of the Spirit - love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control • Let me help others in daily activities • Offer a blessing before meals • Pray with me for the people I love and also people I do not know
Community & The World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can participate in activities that show care and appreciation for others and creation
Significant Terms & Images	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love, Joy, Stewardship, Golden Rule, Disciple, Grace, Forgiveness, Peace, Dove, Lily, Butterfly, Water, Bread & Cup, Cross, Communion, Baptism
Methodist Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love, Grace, Assurance, Sacraments, John Wesley, Charles Wesley, Circuit Riders, Aldersgate
What Teachers & Parents Provide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show children that God is important in the daily life of caring adults • Read stories and sing songs of God • Pray simple prayers for me and with me • Talk about God, community, and love • Model love of God and neighbor • Practice rituals that celebrate God's love

Faith Development: 5-6 Years

God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God wants people to love God and other people
Worship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can participate in corporate worship through attendance, singing, giving, serving, and sharing my gifts • I can offer prayers for others • I begin to understand the significance of the sacraments • Church is a safe and loving place
The Bible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bible helps me to know how God wants me to live • I can tell stories of people in the Bible • Read me stories about God, Jesus, and people of the Bible
Home & Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My family serves those in need and enables me to serve in appropriate ways • My family reads stories of faith and prays together • My family connects church and family
Relating Faith to Daily Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guide me in ways that help me see the needs of others, and address them in ways that are faithful to followers of Christ • Pray with me for the people I love and also people I do not know
Community & The World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can participate in servant ministry • I can participate in activities that show care and appreciation for others and creation
Significant Terms & Images	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love, Joy, Faithfulness, Sabbath, Forgiveness, Peace, Tithes, Disciple, Hospitality, Water, Communion, Baptism, Bread & Cup, Cross
Methodist Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love, Grace, Assurance, Sacraments, General Rules, Holy Living, Cross & Flame
What Teachers & Parents Provide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show children what it means to be a disciple of Christ in the world, while being mindful of the need for safe boundaries

Faith Development: 6-7 Years

God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is everywhere and cares for all people • God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
Worship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can participate in corporate worship through attendance, singing, giving, serving, and sharing my gifts • I can offer prayers for others • I continue to understand the significance of the sacraments • Church is a safe and loving place
The Bible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bible helps me to know how God wants me to live • I can tell stories of people in the Bible • Read stories about God, Jesus, and people of the Bible with me
Home & Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My family serves those in need, and enables me to serve in appropriate ways • My family reads stories of faith and prays together • My family connects church and family
Relating Faith to Daily Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guide me in ways that will help me address situations in a Christian way • Encourage me to pray for the people I love and also people I do not know
Community & The World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can participate in servant ministry in the community and begin to understand how my actions impact those around me
Significant Terms & Images	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love, Joy, Holy Spirit, Faithfulness, Sabbath, Covenant, Forgiveness, Peace, Tithe, Disciple, Discipleship, Miracle, Communion, Baptism, Cross
Methodist Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love, Grace, Assurance, Sacraments, General Rules, Means of Grace, Holy Living, Holiness, Cross & Flame
What Teachers & Parents Provide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a living role-model for children, and talk about how God works in our lives • Show children what it means to be a disciple of Christ in the world, while being mindful of the need for safe boundaries

Faith Development: 7-8 Years

God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God loves us, even when we are disobedient • God cares for all people • God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
Worship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can understand and participate in the order of worship, and can learn the prayers, creeds, and litanies of the church • I can participate in corporate worship through attendance, singing, giving, leadership, serving, and sharing my gifts • Church is a safe and loving place
The Bible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can discuss the meaning of stories in the Bible with others • Read stories about God, Jesus, and people of the Bible with me
Home & Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My family talks about how stories of faith have a direct impact on how we live as a family • My family reads stories of faith and prays together • My family connects church and family
Relating Faith to Daily Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guide me in ways that allow me to use my gifts to help others and to please God • Encourage me to pray for the people I love and also people I do not know
Community & The World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can participate in servant ministry in the community and continue to understand how my actions impact those around me
Significant Terms & Images	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love, Joy, Evangelism, Conversion, Forgiveness, Repentance, Reconciliation, Justice, Missionary, Servanthood, Communion, Baptism, Cross
Methodist Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love, Grace, Assurance, Sacraments, General Rules, Means of Grace, Holy Living, Holiness, Cross & Flame
What Teachers & Parents Provide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help children to understand that God gave them unique gifts, and provide opportunities for them to develop and share those gifts • Be a living role-model for children, and talk about how God works in our lives • Show children what it means to be a disciple of Christ in the world, while being mindful of the need for safe boundaries

Faith Development: 8-9 Years

God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God commands us to love God with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength • God commands us to love others as we love ourselves • God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
Worship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can understand and participate in the order of worship, and can learn the prayers, creeds, and litanies of the church • I can participate in corporate worship through attendance, singing, giving, leadership, serving, and sharing my gifts • Church is a safe and loving place
The Bible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I understand that the Bible is for people of all languages, ethnicities, and cultures • Read and discuss stories about God, Jesus, and people of the Bible with me
Home & Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My family helps me to consider and recognize the rights of others and understand what that means in the way that we live as a family • My family reads stories of faith and prays together • My family connects church and family
Relating Faith to Daily Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guide me in ways that deepen my belief that I am a child of God and part of God's beloved community • Guide me in ways that show devotion to God • Encourage me to pray for the people I love and also people I do not know
Community & The World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I begin to identify and express attitudes, ideas, and feelings about social injustice
Significant Terms & Images	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love, Joy, Kingdom of God, Forgiveness, Intercession, Thanksgiving, Servanthood, Salvation, Heaven, Hell, Witness, Stewardship, Communion, Baptism, Cross
Methodist Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love, Grace, Assurance, Sacraments, General Rules, Means of Grace, Holy Living, Sanctification, Holiness, Cross & Flame
What Teachers & Parents Provide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be open to discussions about God, and intentionally guide children in faith development

Faith Development: 9-10 Years

God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God's care and concern for us exists regardless of our circumstances • God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
Worship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can understand that being a part of a faith community expands beyond the physical walls of the church I attend • I can participate in corporate worship through attendance, singing, giving, leadership, serving, and sharing my gifts • Church is a safe and loving place
The Bible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I understand that the Bible is God's inspired Word and how the Bible came to be • Read and discuss stories about God, Jesus, and people of the Bible with me
Home & Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I begin to take responsibility for acting on Christian beliefs and values as I interact with my family • My family prays together • My family connects church and family
Relating Faith to Daily Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guide me in ways that will help me to take responsibility for acting on Christian beliefs • Guide me in ways that show devotion to God • Encourage me to pray for the people I love and also people I do not know
Community & The World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I continue to identify and express attitudes, ideas, and feelings about social injustice
Significant Terms & Images	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love, Joy, Commitment, Hope, Trust, Truth, Sacrifice, Body of Christ, Eternal Life, Prophecy, Stewardship, Communion, Baptism, Cross
Methodist Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love, Grace, Assurance, Sacraments, General Rules, Means of Grace, Holy Living, Holiness, Sanctification, Confirmation, Cross & Flame
What Teachers & Parents Provide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be open to the ways that children may experience God in ways they are not sure how to articulate

Faith Development: 10-11 Years

God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit • God is a Trinitarian God
Worship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can understand that being a part of a faith community expands beyond the physical walls of the church I attend • I can participate in corporate worship through attendance, singing, giving, leadership, serving, and sharing my gifts • Church is a safe and loving place
The Bible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I understand that the Bible tells me how people's lives were affected by their response to God • Read and discuss stories about God, Jesus, and people of the Bible with me
Home & Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can take responsibility for acting on Christian beliefs and values as I interact with my family • My family prays together • My family connects church and family
Relating Faith to Daily Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guide me in ways that further develop my ability to sense right and wrong in light of Christian faith • Guide me in ways that show devotion to God • Encourage me to pray for the people I love and also people I do not know
Community & The World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can initiate ways to serve others in the community and in the world
Significant Terms & Images	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love, Joy, Lord, Messiah, Christ, Emmanuel, Savior, Shepherd, Son of God, Incarnation, Resurrection, Communion, Baptism, Cross
Methodist Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love, Grace, Assurance, Sacraments, General Rules, Means of Grace, Holy Living, Holiness, Sanctification, Confirmation, Cross & Flame
What Teachers & Parents Provide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be an accepting adult who is willing to hear the many questions about God and God's presence in our lives

What Every Child Should Experience: A Guide for Leaders and Teachers of Children in United Methodist Congregations is a resource developed by Melanie C. Gordon through Discipleship Ministries of The United Methodist Church to assist leaders and teachers of children in United Methodist Congregations in the area of faith formation. You will find this guide useful in choosing and studying scripture, selecting and writing curriculum, offering parents and guardians useful developmental information, and addressing issues facing today's children.

The first section of this resource contains a comprehensive guide to scripture significant for children as they develop cognitively and theologically.

The second section contains comprehensive charts that address the needs of children and the concepts they can understand at different stages of development:

- God
- Worship
- The Bible
- Home and Family
- Relating Faith to Everyday Life
- Community and the World
- Significant Terms and Images
- Our Methodist Heritage
- What Teachers and Parents Provide

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What Every Child Should Experience: A Guide for Leaders & Teachers of Children in United Methodist Congregations
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