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Resources for Evaluating/Selecting Curriculum

[How to Select Curriculum Resources for Congregations of the United Church of Christ](#)

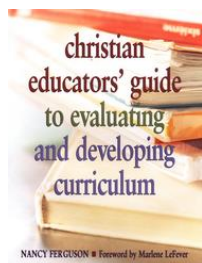
(Published in 2008)

[Curriculum and the Ministry of Christian Education and Evaluating & Choosing a Curriculum](#)

(2011. Sharon Ely Pearson. Church Publishing Incorporated)

[Selecting Curricular Resources That Are Right for Your Church](#)

(2015. Sharon Ely Pearson. Church Publishing Incorporated)



Christian Educator's Guide to Evaluating and Developing Curriculum

Author: Nancy Ferguson

Publisher: Judson Press, 2008

Learn More/Order: www.judsonpress.com , www.christianbook.com ,
www.amazon.com

Product Description from www.amazon.com. "A practical handbook for pastors, lay leaders, and Christian education committees who need help choosing a curriculum that suits their church's beliefs, practices, and membership. For some congregations, no preprinted materials will do--and this guide offers the tools you need to write your own curriculum. Includes a step-by-step process for evaluation of existing materials and creation of new resources!."

About the author, from www.judsonpress.com. Nancy Ferguson is a retired church professional with forty years experience in churches and camps. She is the former day camp director at Camp Hanover in Richmond Virginia and the project manager and editor of *New Earth: Christian Resources for the Outdoors*, an ecumenical curriculum for summer camps. Nancy is the author of eight books including *Teaching Younger Children (Ages 7-10) About God's Creation*, *The Retreat Leader's Manual* with Kevin Witt, *Retreats for Renewal: Five Intergenerational Retreats*, and *Training Staff to Be Spiritual Leaders*.

Ferguson holds an MDiv, a MA in Christian Education and a Ed.S. from Union Presbyterian Seminary (formerly Union Theological Seminary and the Presbyterian School of Christian Education)

UCC Resources:



Faith Practices

Age Level: Multi-age & Intergenerational, Adult (35+), Young Adult (18-35), Older Youth (15-19), Youth (11-15), Older Children (7-11), Younger Children (3-7)
Learn More: [Pilgrim Press Overview](#)

Faith Practices is an online resource that's transforming congregations into communities that worship together, learn together, and serve together. Faith Practices encompass every setting in your congregation (Christian Education, Workshop Rotation, UCC Identity & History, Living Practices in Daily Life).

Update July 2015: Faith Practices is no longer for sale, however, there are still plenty of links/activities accessible in Faith Practices. [Click Here](#) to access the entire Faith Practices resource - 24/7, 365. Plus it will never expire and you can download or print whenever you want.

Giving and Receiving Hospitality
Giving Testimony and Witness
Playing and Living Joyfully
Discovering Gifts of Ministry

Keeping Sabbath
Living Stewardship
Encountering Scripture
Honoring the Body

Working for Justice
Experiencing Beauty
Praying and Making Ritual
Blessing and Letting Go

A Scripture Index for *Faith Practices* is available at:

http://www.nhcucc.org/Documents/Christian_Education/scripture_index_FP.pdf



The publishers of Gather 'Round have released a new curriculum: **Shine: Living in God's Light!** Shine continues many of the features that people loved about Gather 'Round, including faithful retelling of Bible stories, thoughtful reflection, creative activities, and an emphasis on discipleship, peace, service, and community. Shine has additional new features, incorporating some of the latest understandings of best practice in pedagogy. Both Gather 'Round and Shine are committed to nurturing children, youth, and their families in becoming faithful followers of Jesus: people who know and love God, interpret God's word, belong to God's gathered community, and share God's good news.



Shine: Living in God's Light

A project of MennoMedia and Brethren Press

Age Level: Age 3 to Grade 8

Becoming God's People for Early Childhood (Ages 3-5)

Becoming God's People for Primary (K-Grade3)

Glow & Becoming God's People for Middler (Grades 3-6)

LED & Becoming God's People for Junior Youth (Grades 6-8)

Glow & Becoming God's People for MultiAge (K-Grade 6)

Learn More: <https://shinecurriculum.com/>

See the Fall 2017 – Summer 2018 Bible Outlines and Theme Charts

Order via UCC Resources:

<http://www.uccresources.com/collections/shine-living-in-gods-light-curriculum>

*Resources listed in this section have been successfully utilized and recommended by local church(es) in the New Hampshire Conference United Church of Christ.



Deep Blue Kids!

Publisher: United Methodist Publishing House in Nashville, Tennessee.

Age Level: Babies & Woddlers

Toddlers & Two's

Pre-school (Ages 3-4)

Early Elementary (Ages 5-6)

Middle Elementary (Ages 7-8)

Older Elementary (Ages 9-10)

Submerge (Ages 11+)

One Room Sunday school

Large Group/Small Group resources/format

Learn More: <http://www.deepbluekids.com/>

Order via UCC Resources: <http://www.uccresources.com/>

The Deep Blue curriculum is a new awe-inspiring resource for children including adventure, exciting stories, science experiments, arts and crafts, animated video storytelling, and active games—all combined into a living-faith experience that will help children discover what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ today!



Our Whole Lives

Age Level: Pre-school (3-4)

Kindergarten – Grade 1

Grades 4-6

Grades 7-9

Grades 10-12

Young Adults

Adults

Learn More/Order: <http://www.ucc.org/justice/sexuality-education/our-whole-lives.html>

Our Whole Lives is a series of programs for Human **Sexuality Education**. Written by professional sexuality educators, the programs provide accurate information for parents, teachers and pastors to use with children and young people to help them learn about sexuality in the affirming and supportive setting of our churches.

A complete (nationwide) training schedule for *Our Whole Lives* is available at:

<http://www.ucc.org/justice/sexuality-education/training-schedule.html>

*Resources listed in this section have been successfully utilized and recommended by local church(es) in the New Hampshire Conference United Church of Christ.

Other Curricula Resources*:



Godly Play

Age Level: Experience in NHCUCC churches suggest this is best used with children in Pre-school through Grade 3

Author: Rev. Dr. Jerome Berryman

Methodology: Montessori based Faith Formation

Learn More/Order: <http://www.godlyplayfoundation.org/>

From the churchpublishing.org website: "Godly Play is the product of a lifetime of research and practice by theologian, author and educator the Rev. Dr. Jerome Berryman. It began with the proposition that children have a natural sense of God and that what they lack is the appropriate language to help them identify and express it so it can be explored and strengthened. The Godly Play approach developed by Dr. Berryman teaches classical Christian language in a way that does not block or distort the child's authentic experience of God but enhances it so it can contribute to the creative life of the child and the world. Godly Play teaches children the art of using Christian language—parable, sacred story, silence and liturgical action—helping them become more fully aware of the mystery of God's presence in their lives. "



The Best of Whole People of God Online

Age Level: 3-18 (grouped as Nursery, Beginner, Primary, Junior, Youth)

Multi-Age Summer Session

Resources for Intergenerational Worship

Methodology: Lectionary Based

Learn More/Order: <http://www.wholepeopleofgod.com/>

The Best of Whole People of God Online is a complete online Lectionary-based Sunday school curriculum. It includes weekly age-level lessons as well as worship resources for leaders. WPOG is priced especially for small churches – one license grants your church access to ALL of the age-level and worship materials



PowerXpress

Age Level: K to Grade 6

Publisher: Cokesbury, Abingdon Press

Methodology: Rotation format curriculum

Learn More/Order: <http://www.powerxpress.com/default.aspx>

With PowerXpress, children will experience the Bible story in many different ways. When children see AND hear AND do, they retain 90% of the experience.

Adults in your congregation who have never been involved in children's Sunday School can and will communicate the Bible story to children using our complete lesson plans for:

- Art
- Computer
- Cooking
- Games
- Music/Movement
- Science
- Storytelling
- Video

*Resources listed in this section have been successfully utilized and recommended by local church(es) in the New Hampshire Conference United Church of Christ.



Spark: Activate Faith

Age Level: Age 2 to Grade 6

Publisher: Sparkhouse, a Division of Augsburg Fortress

Methodology: Available in three models (Rotation, Classroom, Lectionary)

Learn More/Order: <http://www.wearesparkhouse.org/kids/spark/>

Spark Classroom is a two-year curriculum. Kids explore Old Testament stories each fall and New Testament stories in winter and spring. View the complete [Scope & Sequence](#).

Spark Lectionary is a three-year curriculum, with fall, winter, and spring quarters each year. The lessons correspond to the Revised Common Lectionary—helping kids get more out of both worship and Sunday school. View the complete [Scope & Sequence](#).

Spark Rotation is a way to dive deep into Bible stories. Treat kids to eight workshops about each Bible story. Workshop options include: art, Bible skills and games, computer lab, cooking, creative drama, music, science, and video. [Click here](#) to learn more about the stories offered.



Whirl

Age Level: PreK to Grade 6

Publisher: Sparkhouse, a Division of Augsburg Fortress

Methodology: Lectionary-based curriculum

Learn More/Order: <http://www.wearesparkhouse.org/kids/whirl/>

Whirl is a three-year curriculum that follows the Revised Common Lectionary. It includes lesson materials for fall, winter, and spring quarters each year. During the summer Sundays, use the Director Guide for weekly Children's Messages, Worship Bulletins, and a 30-minute Large Group Experience. [Click here](#) to see the scripture passage and lesson title for each Sunday.

Every Whirl lesson follows a four-part sequence: Welcome, Hear, Respond, and Launch (WHRL!). Each week, kids and leaders start their time together by identifying where they are in the church year and watching an animated video. Next, they dive into the Whirl Story Bible or Whirl NRSV Bible, respond to the scripture lesson with creative leaflet activities, and circle up to review the lesson and pray before being sent out.



Holy Moly

Age Level: Grades K to 4

Publisher: Sparkhouse, a Division of Augsburg Fortress

Methodology: Classroom-based curriculum

Learn More/Order: <http://www.wearesparkhouse.org/kids/holymoly/>

Holy Moly includes ten units that can be covered in two years, spanning the Old Testament and New Testament. See which stories are included, by [clicking here](#).

Each Holy Moly lesson has four components. During Discover, kids watch an animated Bible story video. In Relate, they talk about the story they just watched. Then, in Connect, kids engage with the story again in their Bible Storybook or NRSV Bible to understand the story. Finally, they complete the Create activity with their leaflets.

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Connect

Age Level: Grades 5 and 6

Publisher: Sparkhouse, a Division of Augsburg Fortress

Methodology: Classroom-based curriculum

Learn More/Order: <http://www.wearesparkhouse.org/kids/connect/>

Connect is designed to engage preteens in God's big story through videos, Bible exploration, and hands-on projects. The curriculum includes 10 units, with six lessons in each unit



Seasons of the Spirit

Seasons ENCORE: Age Level (Sunday school) Resources:

Multi-age (5-12)

Birth -2

Children 3-5, Children 6-8, Children 9-11

Youth 12-14, Youth 15-18

Adult

Seasons FUSION: Worship resources for engaging all ages in Faith Formation

Methodology: Lectionary Based, Designed for groups of 12-15 learners

Publisher: Wood Lake Publishing, Inc.

Learn More/Order: <http://www.seasononline.ca>

Seasons of the Spirit is **one inclusive program for the whole congregation**. *Seasons of the Spirit* supports faith communities and families in their life together by

- exploring meaning and mystery in the Bible
- being grounded in thoughtful theology
- empowering children, youth, and adults to be transformed in Christ
- inspiring and equipping leaders
- nurturing the imaginative spirit
- offering resources for all ages
- integrating worship, learning, and serving ministries



DIG IN
CREATING DEEPER BIBLE EXPERIENCES FOR KIDS

DIG IN

- Age Level: Pre-school to 6th Grade.
- Publisher: Group

- Methodology: digital Sunday school curriculum
- Learn More/Order: <https://www.group.com/category/ministry-resources/childrens-ministry/sunday-school/dig-in.do> (Watch a Video Overview of the curriculum, or try out the free demo tool)

DIG IN curriculum provides creative, multisensory teaching that immerses your kids in deep Bible learning, helping them to know Jesus personally and grow in relationship with him. DIG IN's web-based platform allows lessons to be adapted to the natural strengths of each teacher and to the interests of the kids in the class.

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