CURRICULUM & GROUP RESOURCES
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Selecting / Evaluating Curriculum Resources

Children’s Curriculum Chart

Sharon Ely Pearson publishes a Children’s Curriculum Chart each spring. Check out the latest one at:
https://rowsofsharon.files.wordpress.com/2021/06/june2021curriculumchartforchildren.pdf

Resources for Evaluating/Selecting Curriculum

The Sunday School Curriculum Overview booklet, from Practical Resources for Churches, has information about how curriculum is produced and the different types, as well as tips on selecting curriculum. There is a listing of curricula available for denominations and from nondenominational publishers. The booklet also has suggested resources for youth Sunday school. There are links for each curriculum which take you to the publishers’ websites where you can find more information, download samples, and get current pricing. (Revised April 2021)

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

Selecting Curricular Resources That Are Right for Your Church

Christian Educator’s Guide to Evaluating and Developing Curriculum

Author: Nancy Ferguson
Publisher: Judson Press, 2008

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.

Multi-Age / Intergenerational Resources

Cross+Gen Conversations

Age Level: Multi-age & Intergenerational

Summary: Cross+Gen Conversations™ is a resource designed to help you lead your church in caring cross generational (Cross+Gen) faith encounters built around the basic themes of faith. Connect, collect and collide the wisdom of the elder and the wonder of the child every week around the big themes of:

- Ten Commandments
- Apostles’ Creed
- Lord’s Prayer
- Sacraments
- Luther and the Reformation

Cross+Gen Conversations™ can be easily adapted to virtual and in-person settings, including worship, confirmation, education hour, Bible study, or even as a conversation starter during fellowship.

Learn More: https://faithink.com/crossgen-conversations

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)


The twelve faith practices explored in this resource are: Giving and Receiving Hospitality; Keeping Sabbath; Working for Justice; Giving Testimony and Witness; Living Stewardship; Experiencing Beauty; Playing and Living Joyfully; Encountering Scripture; Praying and Making Ritual; Discovering Gifts of Ministry; Honoring the Body; and Blessing and Letting Go.

A Scripture Index for Faith Practices is available at:

Learn More: https://www.ucc.org/faith-practices/

Update April 2021: Faith Practices is now available for download from The Pilgrim Press at:
https://www.thepilgrimpress.com/products/faith-practices-group-sets-downloadable-pdfs?pos=1&sid=7dfbf490&ss=r

*This resource is available for FREE to AUCE Members on the AUCE website Members page.*
Feasting on the Word

Age Level: Grades K-2
Grades 3-4
Tweens (Grades 5-6)
Multiage (Grades K-6)
Youth
Young Adult
Adults

Summary: Feasting on the Word Curriculum follows the Revised Common Lectionary and allows everyone to explore the same Bible passage each week. This makes it easy for families to live out their faith together. This curriculum invites learners from children through adults into the rhythm of the church year. Leaders of each age group are provided with a solid biblical background from the well-known commentary Feasting on the Word. Explore the what, where, so what, and now what of each biblical passage from the lectionary through a variety of learning and teaching styles. Joining the Feast connects education with worship offering suggestions to use during the worship service.

Learn More: https://www.pcusastore.com/Products/CategoryCenter/CFOW/Feasting-on-the-Word.aspx

Follow Me: Biblical Practices for Faithful Living (NEW!)

Age Level: Young children (ages 3-5)
Multiage children (ages 6-10)
Youth (ages 11-18)
Adult
Congregational Guide

Summary: This thirty-six-unit curriculum is based on practices Jesus did and taught us to do as faithful followers. Written for people of all ages who wish to live out their faith, this new curriculum examines where these practices are found in the Bible and how they have been used in Christian faith then and now.

The 36 practices are: Follow Jesus; Welcome All; Confess; Hope; Baptize; Live in Community; Practice Spiritual Disciplines; Practice Joy; Honor God’s Diversity; Sing a New Song; Make Peace; Practice Generosity; Honor Sabbath; Pray; Forgive; Announce the Realm of God; Lament; Do Justice; Love God, Neighbor, Enemy; Celebrate Communion; Break Boundaries; Make Disciples; Care for Creation; Walk Humbly; Take Up Your Cross; Worship God; Feed Others; Do Not Fear; Renounce Evil; Comfort Those Who Mourn; Use Spiritual Gifts; Share the Good News; Serve Others; Heal the Sick; Practice Gratitude; and Speak the Truth.

Learn more: https://www.pcusastore.com/Pages/Item/15439/Follow-Me-Curriculum.aspx
LOGOS

Age Level: Resources for all Generations growing and learning together in faith

Methodology: In each LOGOS gathering you play, share a meal, engage in Bible study and learn to be worship leaders

Summary: LOGOS is built on 3 KEY PRACTICES:

- **Theology of Relationships** A strong scripture-based understanding of who God is in our lives, the nature of our personal relationship with God, and the resulting impact on our relationships with others because of God's presence in our lives.
- **Process of Call** A scripture-directed approach for aligning personal gifts and efforts with the needs of a ministry or mission that results from God's purpose and plan.
- **Balanced Ministry** A requirement that ministry addresses and engages the mind, soul and body in a disciple-making process that teaches and provides an opportunity to practice the faith.


Milestones Ministry and Taking Faith Home

Age Level: Resources for all Generations

Summary: Milestones Ministry provides a faith milestone as a marker along life’s journey that says, “This is something important, and God is here, too.” It is a faith formation practice for both home and congregation that helps all generations recognize God's presence in everyday life.

Milestones Ministry offers the following benefits:
- Helps households and congregations nurture the Christian faith through life’s milestones, such as baptism, weddings, confirmation, beginning school, getting a driver's license, graduation, anniversaries, retirement and more
- Provides a clear and usable model to connect faith with daily life experiences
- Promotes Christian faith formation and outreach into the larger community
- Uses a simple structure and the Four Keys faith practices to deepen the Christian foundation in people’s lives


Order Materials/Milestone Modules: [https://store.milestonesministry.org/](https://store.milestonesministry.org/)
Our Whole Lives / Sexuality and Our Faith

Age Level: Pre-school (3-4)
Kindergarten – Grade 1
Grades 4-6
Grades 7-9
Grades 10-12
Young Adults
Adults

Summary: *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.


Seasons of the Spirit

Age Level: Seasons ENCORE (Sunday school) Resources, Multi-age (5-12)
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.

Summary: *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

Learn More/Order: [http://www.seasonsonline.ca](http://www.seasonsonline.ca)
**Shine: Living in God’s Light**

**Age Level:**
- Wee Wonder (two year olds)
- Early Childhood (ages three to five),
- Primary (Grades K-2)
- Older Elementary (Grades 3-5)
- Multiage (Grades K-5),
- Junior Youth (Grades 6-8),
- Generation Why? (Youth),
- Current (Intergenerational)

**Summary:** *A project of MennoMedia and Brethren Press,* with Faith Formation resources for all ages, *Shine: Living in God’s Light* is a dynamic curriculum that engages Christian communities and families in their life together.

- calls children to experience the transforming power of God’s love and shine God’s light in the world;
- nurtures trust in God and invites children to follow Jesus;
- encourages imaginative, interactive biblical storytelling;
- explores the meaning of the Bible within the gathered community;
- cultivates the inner life of the Spirit through spiritual practices;
- expresses faith through lives of compassionate peacemaking and service.

Check out *Come to the Table*, their all ages Vacation Bible School Program for the Summer of 2021: [https://shinecurriculum.com/resources/sample-sessions/vacation-bible-school/](https://shinecurriculum.com/resources/sample-sessions/vacation-bible-school/)

View the Bible Outlines and Theme Charts through 2023: [https://shinecurriculum.com/about/bible-outlines/](https://shinecurriculum.com/about/bible-outlines/)

Learn More: [https://shinecurriculum.com/](https://shinecurriculum.com/)

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**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

**Summary:** *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

Adult Resources

Animate. Faith.

Age Level: Adult/Young Adult
Methodology: DVD (with live action presentations), Interactive Journal, Discussion
Publisher: SparkHouse

Summary: A seven session course based on the work of seven leading Christian voices: Lillian Daniel, Nadia Bolz-Weber, Shane Hipps, Brian McLaren, Bruce Reyes-Chow, Lauren Winner, and Mark Scandrette. Their goal was to create an accessible, captivating exploration of big questions of the Christian faith – designed to spark conversation in faith communities like yours. NH churches using the program, describe it as engaging, Progressive Christianity for those who are comfortable with technology.

Learn More/Order: http://wearesparkhouse.org/adults/animate/faith/

Animate. Practices.

Age Level: Adult
Methodology: DVD (with live action presentations), Interactive Journal, Discussion
Publisher: SparkHouse

Summary: Animate: Practices is a seven-session adult introduction to the central practices of the Christian faith. The seven topics /practices are: prayer, food, worship, sacraments, money, service and community. In each Animate: Practices session, the group will watch a video featuring a leading voice from the Christian faith, spend time on personal reflection and journaling, and share ideas with the group. The order of the session is up to you and what works best for your group. Session resources are available as a complete curriculum or a la carte.

Learn More/Order: http://wearesparkhouse.org/adults/animate/practices/

Animate: Bible.

Age Level: Adult
Methodology: DVD (with live action presentations), Interactive Journal, Discussion
Publisher: SparkHouse

Summary: Animate: Bible is also a seven-session, where adults explore the Bible. The seven topics are: Cannon, History, Testaments, Gospels, Genre, Interpretation and Grace. In each session, the group will watch a video featuring a leading voice from the Christian faith, spend time on personal reflection and journaling, and share ideas with the group. The order of the session is up to you and what works best for your group. Session resources are available as a complete curriculum or a la carte.

Learn More/Order: http://wearesparkhouse.org/adults/animate/bible/

Not sure which will work best for you? See the Animate Comparison Chart: http://wearesparkhouse.org/media/downloads/Animate/AnimateComparisionChart2014.pdf
LISTEN UP!

Age Level: Adult
Methodology: Discussion & Activities

Summary: What's a LISTEN UP! Bible Study, and why is it unique?
God's word is alive. God will always have something new to say to us. That's why the purpose of the LISTEN UP! Bible Study series is not simply learning information about the Bible. It is hearing God speak. There is a difference. In these Bible studies, you will be encouraged to listen: listen to the Bible, listen to your own questions and responses, and listen to the honest sharing among participants in your study group. Trusting in the power of the Holy Spirit, we believe that in that mix of biblical text, personal engagement, and honest speaking and listening, God's word may be heard, speaking words of challenge and words of comfort. A Leader's Guide is included in each workbook.

The LISTEN UP! Bible Studies available for download:

- 1 Corinthians by Anthony B. Robinson and Patricia de Jong
- 2 Corinthians by Anthony B. Robinson and Patricia de Jong
- The Book of Acts - by Anthony B. Robinson
- Ecclesiastes by Molly Baskette
- Genesis - by Judith Copeland, Kate Layzer, and Jed Rardin
- Job by Daniel Cooperider
- Mark - by Talitha Arnold
- Romans - by Michael S. Bennett and Richard L. Floyd

Learn More/Order: https://www.thepilgrimpress.com/collections/listen-up

Living the Questions 2

Age Level: Adult
Methodology: Progressive Theology, Video Segments and Discussion

Summary: From their website, “Living the Questions is a source of curriculum and media for both seekers and "church alumni/ae" convinced that Christianity still has relevance in the 21st Century. Providing a variety of flexible resources, Living the Questions can help people explore the future of Christianity and what a meaningful faith can look like in today's world.”

There program consists of 21 sessions. Each session may be conducted in one hour or expanded to include a meal and personal sharing. The 20-minute video segments include conversations with leading voices of faith, digital stories illustrating aspects of an evolving faith, and concrete spiritual practices and disciplines. The flexible DVD and resource materials can be used in variety of class, retreat, and other formats.

Learn More/Order: https://livingthequestions.com/product/living-the-questions-2-0/
The Embracing Series

Age Level: Adult  
Methodology: Small Group DVD Study with Participant Workbook  
Publisher: Morehouse Education / Church Publishing Incorporated

Summary: Small Group Studies that deal with contemporary topics with guided discussions based on the perspective of well-known Christian Leaders:

- Embracing Forgiveness, Barbara Cawthorne Crafton
- Embracing Spiritual Awakening, Diana Butler Bass
- Embracing Interfaith Cooperation, Eboo Patel
- Embracing An Alternative Orthodoxy, Richard Rohr
- Embracing Emergence Christianity, Phyllis Tickle
- Embracing a Life of Meaning, Kathleen Norris
- Embracing an Adult Faith, Marcus Borg
- Embracing the Prophets in a Contemporary Culture, Walter Brueggemann

Learn More/order: https://www.churchpublishing.org/

The Kerygma Program

Age Level: Adult  
Methodology: Study Group/Discussion based on individual books or the Bible as a whole.

Summary: Since 1977, The Kerygma Program has served congregations worldwide by publishing quality, non-denominational resources for Bible study and recommending proven strategies for developing and sustaining effective study groups. Kerygma resources promise a deeply satisfying encounter with Scripture, for those long familiar with the Bible and those opening its pages for the first time.

Learn More/Order: http://www.kerygma.com

The Present Word

Age Level: Adult  
Methodology: Experiential with Discussion & Activities  
Publisher: Presbyterian Church (USA)

Summary: The Present Word is an adult Bible study curriculum that uses the Uniform Series which is a way to study the Bible over a six-year period. Each quarter works its way through different books of the Bible and focuses on a different theme. As you study each passage of scripture discover its deeper meaning and how it is relevant to our world today. This quarterly resource features an Adult Leader’s Guide and an Adult Participant Workbook.

Learn More/Order: https://www.pcusastore.com/Products/CategoryCenter/ACTPW/The-Present-Word.aspx
Children’s Resources

**Celebrate Wonder**

**Age Level:**
- Ages 3-5
- Ages 6-9
- Ages 9+
- Family activities

**Summary:** Celebrate Wonder is a Sunday school curriculum that engages children’s natural sense of curiosity to help them understand God’s love. It creates a safe environment for kids to ask big questions — helping them explore the Bible in ways that feed their imagination and encourages creativity. Through carefully-selected Bible stories, songs, videos, and hands-on activities, Celebrate Wonder gives children the tools to explore their faith while incorporating it into their daily lives. [Now available in virtual and in-person formats!](https://www.cokesburykids.com/curriculum~celebrate-wonder)

Learn More: [https://www.cokesburykids.com/curriculum~celebrate-wonder](https://www.cokesburykids.com/curriculum~celebrate-wonder)

**Connect**

**Age Level:** Grades 5 and 6

**Publisher:** Sparkhouse, a Division of Augsburg Fortress

**Methodology:** Classroom-based curriculum

**Summary:** 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.


**Deep Blue**

**Age Level:**
- Deep Blue Nursery (Ages 0-3)
- Deep Blue Kids Large Group/Small Group (Ages 3-12)
- Deep Blue Rotation Stations (Ages 3-12)

**Summary:** *Deep Blue Kids* is a weekly adventure through the Bible. Teach kids about God and what it means to be a follower of Jesus. With a variety of formats this curriculum provides options for small groups, large groups or a chance to immerse your children in the Bible with a rotational curriculum.

Learn more: [https://www.cokesburykids.com/curriculum~deep-blue-nursery](https://www.cokesburykids.com/curriculum~deep-blue-nursery)
[https://www.cokesburykids.com/deep-blue-kids---large-groupsmall-group](https://www.cokesburykids.com/deep-blue-kids---large-groupsmall-group)
[https://www.cokesburykids.com/rotation-stations](https://www.cokesburykids.com/rotation-stations)
**DIG IN**

**Age Level:** Pre-school to 6th Grade.  
**Publisher:** Group  
**Methodology:** digital Sunday school curriculum

**Summary:** 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.

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)

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**Godly Play**

**Age Level:** Experience in NHCUCC churches suggest this is best used with children in Pre-school through Grade 3  
**Methodology:** Montessori based Faith Formation

**Summary:** 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. “

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

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**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/

**Summary:** 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.

Learn More/Order: http://www.wearesparkhouse.org/kids/holymoly/
**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)

**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.


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**Whirl**

**Age Level:** PreK to Grade 6  
**Publisher:** Sparkhouse, a Division of Augsburg Fortress  
**Methodology:** Lectionary-based curriculum

**Summary:** 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.

Youth Resources

Caffeine & …

Age Level: Youth
Methodology: Impromptu discussion starter
Author: Steven Case

Summary: The Caffeine series is a youth resource that can be used as a self-study or group study. These books are written in an accessible way, and include imaginative retellings of Bible stories that put Christianity into contemporary language and experience.

Current books in the series include:

- Caffeine & Cash
- Caffeine & Celebration
- Caffeine & Chutzpah
- Caffeine & Character
- Caffeine & Commitment
- Caffeine & Courage
- Caffeine & Christ
- Caffeine & Confusion

Learn More/Order: https://www.thepilgrimpress.com/search?type=product&q=caffeine

CoLaborate Bible Study

Age Level: High School
Publisher: Spark House, a division of Augsburg Fortress

Summary: The CoLaborate Bible Study is a hands-on investigative learning that leads to deep conversation about God and what it means to follow Jesus.

Learn More/Order: https://www.wearsparkhouse.org/store/category/286837/Colaborate-Bible-Study

Echo The Story

Publisher: Spark House, a division of Augsburg Fortress

Summary: Deepen your youth ministry. Experience the biblical narrative through storytelling, creative reflection, and dialogue.

Learn More/Order: http://wearesparkhouse.org/teens/echothestory/
Just Eating? Practicing Our Faith at the Table

**Age Level:** Middle School  
**Publisher:** The *Just Eating* curriculum was developed by UCC affiliated Advocate Health Care in partnership with Church World Service, and the Presbyterian Hunger Program. It was funded by a Practicing Our Faith grant from the Valparaiso Project on the Formation and Education of People in Faith and the UCC Genesis Fund.

**Summary:** *Just Eating? Practicing Our Faith at the Table* helps young people better understand the relationship between our faith and our food. The curriculum is available to download for free and includes fun activities, Bible stories and illustrations in story, song and screen that will challenge teenagers to think about food and our faith in new ways. *Just Eating?* is also available as a curriculum for adults and high school groups.


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Re:form

**Age Level:** Youth Ministry/Teens.  
Experience in NHCUCC churches suggest the cartoonish videos used in this series are most appealing to tweens (grades 5-6) or junior youth (grades 6-8)

**Publisher:** Spark House, a division of Augsburg Fortress

**Summary:** From the Spark House website: “You said it was time to jettison those crusty, sleep-inducing programs of the past. And we listened. You said youth ministry should be about exploration, not indoctrination. And we agreed. Re:form is a totally new approach to youth ministry that trusts youth to wrestle with the historic Christian faith and theology.

**Re:form.** Empower youth to explore faith and ask questions about the Bible, the Apostles’ Creed, disciples, Jesus, and hot topics.

**Re:form Traditions.** Discover the backstory, key beliefs, and practices for specific Christian faith traditions, why they matter, and how they are relevant today.

**Re:form Ancestors.** Discover how similar we are to our faith ancestors from the Old and New Testaments.