

PictureTM the Bible

A Biblical Pictorial Timeline

Come! *Picture the Bible*

Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

—Psalm 119:105

What is the Bible? Often Christians say the Bible is God's Word. In the Bible are stories and ideas that tell us and show us who God is and what God is like. The first words of the Bible are: "In the beginning" and the last word is "Amen." In between are all kinds of stories; long stories, short stories, scary stories, funny stories, confusing stories, and comforting stories—and all of these stories tell us about God and God's Way.

Dear Faith Formation Leader and Clergy,

This past year, you have been challenged to rethink the way you connect with your congregation and how you offer faith formation opportunities. The amount of energy, creativity and work that has been put into this has not gone unnoticed. Too often, our faith formation leaders are left to search out and identify good curricular resources with a strong and appropriate theological foundation. *Picture the Bible* is one such resource and the Wisconsin Conference UCC would like to show our recognition of, and appreciation for, the work and ministry you are engaged in by offering a four-week curriculum/resource package from Picture The Bible in time for Eastertide. This unit, *God's Way*, can be used now or in the future. Curriculum can be expensive and this is our gift to you. While you have the option to purchase hard copies of the curriculum resources, the Wisconsin Conference UCC is providing online access to the materials so that you can print out the copies you need. We are excited to make this resource available to you and hope you will be inspired and encouraged by all it has to offer.

With gratitude for your faithfulness and commitment to faith formation.

Lisa Hart
Associate Conference Minister
for Faith Formation and Justice Ministries

Franz Rigert
Conference Minister

"If you look at a window, you see flyspecks, dust, the crack where Junior's frisbee hit it. If you look through a window, you see the world beyond."

— Frederick Buechner, pastor, writer, and theologian;
from *Wishful Thinking*



What do you see?



What do you see?

When you use *Picture the Bible*, you will do more than look **at** the Bible's stories. You will look **through** these stories. After all, these stories have something to say to **you!** Remember: **The Bible is your story!**

Picture the Bible is a collection of easy-to-use resources with a wide range of possibilities to tailor to your programming:

- **Be creative.**
- **Use your brain.** Ask questions, the more the better.
- **Connect** each image and story to your life and to the world.
- **Talk, learn, think, and explore** these images/stories together.

What is in this packet?

This **information and idea** page;

Four **art reproductions** (printed back-to-back);

Four age-levels of **resource pages** for each of four biblical texts:

- Jesus Blesses the Children
- The Sermon on the Mount
- Jesus Feeds 5,000 People
- Let Justice Roll

A "Little Book" with four stories and activities.

When could I use these resources?

The short answer is use them when it is right for you and your congregation.

The longer answer is these resources could:

- become **the focus of Sundays** (worship and education) in Eastertide;
- provide the basis for **multigenerational** in-person gatherings on your church lawn;
- be the center of **Sunday School** or faith formation events;
- provide curriculum for a series of Zoom **adult Bible studies**;
- be woven into your **confirmation** program;
- support **at-home education** for your families;
- inspire you to be creative and find a time and opportunity that **fits your ministry needs** and goals.

How do I use these resources?

Picture the Bible resources support biblical literacy and interpretation through conversation. “Conversation” is key. The resources are designed to get people of all ages talking about Bible texts, wondering what they meant to their first listeners, and asking what these ancient, yet always new texts say to us in our world today. The pages intentionally blur the line between leader and learner so all participants have the opportunity to contribute ideas.

Leaders do not need to take much time for preparation and do not necessarily need theological training.

Using the Resource Pages

Embedded in the resources pages are ideas and images to engage people in the conversation. Leaders and learners move through the pages together, learning from each other. A few suggestions:

- Use the resources pages to help learners explore the Bible text and relate it to their own lives. With few exceptions there are no “right” or “wrong” answers to the discussion questions.
- Move through the page in a way that works for your group. There is no prescribed path through the page, although it makes good sense to start with the top front as it introduces the Bible text, art, and identifies the theme.
- Ask questions that encourage learners to explore the text and ideas deeply and reflectively.

Asking Questions

The questions you ask have a lot to say about the character of your conversation. In general ask fewer questions to test learners’ memories (How many disciples are there?) and more questions designed to explore ideas. Some suggestions:

- How do you think about...? How else could you describe...?
- If you were the character, what would you do?
- What’s the most important idea in this story?
- How would you feel if...?
- Why do you think Jesus said...?
- Find evidence to show that God acts in surprising ways?
- How do these stories fit together? What does this story tell you about God’s way?

Art Reproductions

Sharing the art is a key component of **Picture the Bible**. The art helps people explore key aspects of the Bible text. Display the art and share it with your congregation in your online format. Access to electronic image files is provided (see below).



Little Book

The Little Book in your packet is an example of a simple book you can easily print, fold, staple, and cut. The Little Book features the four stories of this study and is a great resource to send home with families or for children to receive in the mail. A surprise Little Book arriving in the mail is an easy, fun way to stay connected to families while providing them with at-home faith formation resources.

Image Files and Additional Copies

Your packet includes examples of all pages.

For access to the image files and more copies:

Send an email to stacy@firstchurchrf.org to receive free access to electronic files to download and print. Print the number you need. You will also have access to files of the art images to share with your congregation.

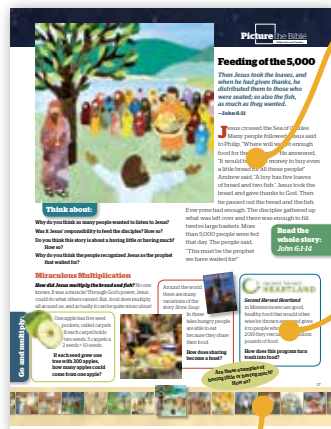
Call First Congregational Church (715-425-2052) during business hours to place an order for hard copies. Hard copies of each page for each story and the Little Book will be sold in individual sets of five. You can order multiple copies of only the pages you need. The cost for each set of five is \$2.00. Please allow adequate time for packaging and delivery if you select this option. Shipments will be sent out Mondays–Thursdays.

4 Resource levels

with both common and unique materials. This allows for generations of people to have similar conversations in age-appropriate ways about a shared theme.

Learners' Page Features

Conversation Pages for grades 3-8



The **front page** features the image, memory verse, synopsis of the story matching the image, Bible reference for the whole story, and discussion questions to consider.

The **bottom of the front page** relates the Bible story to the world and/or the learners' lives.

The **bottom banner on the front** features the *Picture the Bible* images, in order, with the focus image larger and in the middle. This feature reminds learners of the context of individual Bible stories.

The **back page** provides an opportunity explore the Bible story and its related themes through science, art, history, music and so on.

Dictionary definitions. Some concepts are specifically defined in a box.

Adult Pages for grades 9-Adults



The **inside pages** include a variety of ideas to discuss and information to explore.

The **inside bottom** pocket graphic poses two summary

questions about the story. What will you take with you?

The **back page** offers background about the text and a list of questions to consider.

Young Children's Pages for Pre K–grade 2



The **front page** focuses on questions and ideas specifically geared to helping young children experience the art and explore the story. The **back page** is a coloring page matching the art.

Family Pages for families with children



Front side features ideas to talk about appropriate for a wide range of ages.

Family pages were developed for in-home use during the pandemic.

The **back page** includes a picture to color as well as conversation starters that connect the Bible text and contemporary life.



Extending the Learning

Add some creativity to the activities in the resource pages to extend the experience. For example:

- **Jesus Blesses the Children:** Encourage people, young and old, to make an abstract self-portrait. Make a slide show of all the finished masterpieces or arrange them on a bulletin board. Marvel at the wonderful variety of God's people.
- **The Sermon on the Mount:** Create Fibonacci art by reproducing the Fibonacci spiral with paper and markers or paint or even with fabric. Discuss how science and math help us to learn about God's creation.
- **Jesus Feeds 5,000 People:** Color the mosaic and then explore other ancient Christian mosaics. Work together to create your own large or small mosaic.
- **Let Justice Roll:** Invite people to play games of Monopoly where players are randomly assigned different rules. Talk about the experience. How does or doesn't this way of playing Monopoly reflect what things are like in the world today?

- **God's way:** Guide people in a conversation about God's way. What is it? What isn't it? Where is God's way evident? How can we participate in God's way? What inhibits God's way? How can the congregation's ministry be guided by a commitment to God's way?

Worship and Preaching

PTB resource pages are filled with images and ideas. Many of them lend themselves to preaching. Draw upon ideas in the resource pages to both support your sermon as well as connect faith formation events to Sunday worship. As part of this gift, you also have access to a digital version of the art that can be used for projection in worship or on a bulletin cover. To receive the digital file, email stacy@firstchurchrf.org.

For more information

- Attend or view a recorded Zoom session about the materials in this packet on March 23, 2021 at 11:00 am. To register, contact Lisa Hart at lhart@wcucc.org
- Contact Pastor Stacy Myers at stacy@firstchurchrf.org (715-425-2052) or Lisa Hart at lhart@wcucc.org.

More Picture the Bible Resources

52 Bible stories

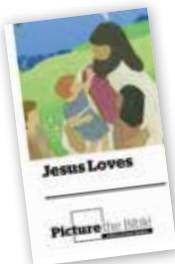
The resources you received in this packet are a special edition of **Picture the Bible**. The **Picture the Bible** collection of resources includes 52 art images and corresponding conversation pages.

Picture the Bible resources include:

Conversations pages in 4 levels for each of the 52 stories

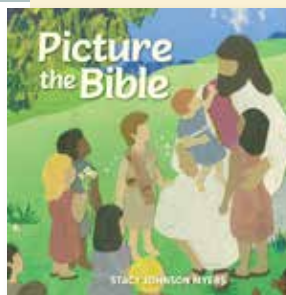


52 12x12" art reproductions, available in sets. Please note that the art reproductions you received in this packet are small, special edition reproductions.



More **Little Books** of seven stories each, grouped thematically.

Coloring books, grouped thematically, with a story synopses and questions to ponder.



Forthcoming in Spring 2021 is a **Picture the Bible** children's story Bible. <https://www.thepilgrimpress.com/collections/new-releases/products/picture-the-bible>. Ask for the book at your local independent bookseller.

To view a trailer for this new book, visit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V9LY-kgDQys&feature=youtu.be>.



Light in the Darkness, a short storybook featuring Picture the Bible art.

Given for You: The Biblical Story of Communion, a book for communion or confirmation preparation

Visit [PicturetheBible.com](https://www.picturethebible.com) to order these and other resources!