

Choosing Curriculum

Congregations take a variety of approaches when choosing a Sunday school curriculum. Here are a few ideas to help you develop a program of your own.

Developing a congregational vision of Sunday school as a vital tool for the spiritual growth and development of the children is a great way to begin or refresh a Sunday school program. Articulating specific goals may also help narrow the focus of what and how you teach.

Ready-to-Teach Lessons

Jacob's Ladder is a comprehensive lesson program for ages 5 to 12. By the end of the program students will have learned stories from throughout the Bible. Each level provides 36 lessons for one age group, including festivals. Illustrated lesson books are classroom-ready. Age-appropriate activity packages include songs, projects, videos, pictures to color and more. Lessons are based on the General Church Schools religion curriculum. Jacob's Ladder Introductory Level-Level 5 are available as individual lessons [online](#). These levels can also be purchased in book format at newchristianresources.org. Level 6 is being redeveloped; contact gced@newchurch.org for more information on availability.

Youth Journey Programs are based on well known Bible stories. Each set of lessons provides 6-7 weeks of lessons in 3 or 4 age levels for ages 3-14, or 3-18. Scripted lessons are ready to teach with little preparation. Lessons provide a warm-up, reading, discussion, choice of projects, and wrap-up. Look for videos, memory verses, games, songs, experiments, pictures to color, notes for parents, and more. Topics include Creation, Exodus, Joseph, Elijah, the Ten Commandments and Parables of Heaven. These programs are available as individual lessons [online](#) or may be purchased in book form at newchristianresources.org.

Ask your pastor for the children's topic early in the week. Take time to read the story yourself. Use Sunday school lessons to reinforce ideas shared by the pastor by discussing the story and following up with a fun hands-on project. Look for project ideas at newchurchvineyard.org or make up your own creative activity.

Teach the Bible in Four Years

Select stories from the beginning to the end of the Word every year choosing different stories each time. A curriculum like this helps children understand the history and sequence of the stories in the Bible and provides a framework in which children can understand stories they learn.

A sample curriculum, [Teach the Bible in Four Years](#) (PDF) suggests one way to do this. Resources such as [Bible Stories and Their Inner Meaning](#) (available at swedenborgdigitallibrary.org) and the **Dole Bible Study Notes** ([Old Testament](#), [New Testament](#)) provide helpful teacher background.

Themes in the Word

Follow themes such as parables, miracles, heaven, the Lord, etc. for 4-6 consecutive weeks. Themed ready-to-use resources including teacher background, lessons, projects, pictures to color are offered as [Highlights](#) at newchurchvineyard.org.

Family Lessons

If your program is small and your group includes children of different ages try using the **Family Lessons**. Lessons are available for the [Old Testament](#), and the [New Testament](#) at newchurchvineyard.org. Each lesson includes a talk for all ages, as well as separate projects for children of different ages. See a complete list of [Family Lessons](#) (PDF). Youth Journey Programs also provide activities for all ages.

Lessons Developed by New Church Congregations

There are several sets of Sunday School lesson outlines with teacher background discussion ideas, activities and projects for various stories in the Old and New Testaments. Available series include:

- [Glenview Bible Story Lessons for Young Children](#) (ages 3-5)
- [Glenview Lessons on the Story of Israel](#) (ages 5-9)
- [Glenview Lessons on the Life of the Lord](#) (ages 5-9)
- [Glenview Lessons on Creation, Heaven, and the Book of Revelation](#) (ages 5-9)
- [Oak Arbor Preschool Lessons](#) (ages 3-6)
- [Oak Arbor Intermediate Lessons](#) (ages 9-12)

Building on the Early Years: Lessons for Teens

The **FaithBuilder** program offers 4-years of video-based lessons for ages 11-17. Lessons include a warm-up, main lesson feature (video or reading), discussion questions and teacher background (quotes from the Writings). [Year 1](#), [Year 2](#) and [Year 4](#) offer lessons on key New Church topics such as the Lord, Divine providence, eternal life, and marriage; [Year 3](#) is a study of the Gospel of John. An [overview](#) of all FaithBuilder lessons online at newchurchvineyard.org.

Discovering the New Church offers lessons on [the Lord](#), [eternal life](#), [the Word of God](#), [marriage love](#), and [Divine providence](#) for teens and up. Each lesson includes readings, discussion (questions, true/false, multiple choice), a choice of 3 or more hands-on activities, a take-home, and teacher background (sermon and quotes from the Writings).

A series on [Charity](#) is a chapter-by-chapter study of the Doctrine of Charity by Emanuel Swedenborg for ages 12-16, developed by the Oak Arbor New Church.