



PRESBYTERIANS ORGANIZED IN
Nurture & Teaching

Creative Use of Resources

Members of Presbyterians Organized in Nurture and Teaching (POINT) at a previous training event explored a variety of resources and brainstormed how to creatively use or adapt each for different congregational settings. The gifted people around the tables—church educators, pastors, resource center directors, presbytery staff, and volunteers—shared their ideas for making disciples through intentional events with quality resources.

Each resource is listed with annotation, ordering information, and suggested ways to use the resource.

Invitation to Christ: A Guide to Sacramental Practices
by The Sacraments Study Group of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Invitation to Christ was created through the Office of Theology & Worship of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in 2006. Believing that lived experiences deepen people's understanding, the Sacraments Study Group of the PC(USA) offers 5 sacramental practices for sacramental renewal. As outlined in the pastoral letter from the resource, the five simple disciplines are:

- Set the font in full view of the congregation
- Open the font and fill it with water on every Lord's Day
- Set cup and plate on the Lord's Table on every Lord's Day
- Lead appropriate parts of weekly worship from the font and from the table
- Increase the number of Sundays on which the Lord's Supper is celebrated.

Theological reflections and study questions are included in the resource.

Order this free resource through Presbyterian Distribution, (800) 254-2612, item #7043006001, store.pcusa.org, \$5.00. You can also download a single copy from <http://www.pcusa.org/sacraments/guide.htm>.

A small rural church of mostly adults with 2 or 3 children and a few youth

Invite participation by families by incorporating the children and youth in several of these practices. Involve them with their parents or in other "families". Ask folks to bring forward the "gifts" of water and/or cup and plate each week.

A mid-size multicultural church located in a declining urban area

Use chalices and plates that represent different cultures. Provide different breads from different cultures. Bring forward ewers, pitchers, or containers used in different parts of the world to collect water. Use different fabrics for communion table or for wall hangings and banners. Ask folks in the congregation to pray in their native language, especially words of institution. These ideas would be very appropriate for World Communion Sunday (the first Sunday in October).

A large 2000 member suburban church with classes for each age grouping

Using the same outline, adapt activities for age appropriateness. Each age group or class could take responsibility for a Sunday to set up the elements and participate in worship.

A rotation model Sunday school program

"Camp Big Church" could use the five disciplines to prepare Kindergarten/Pre-Kindergarten children to participate fully in the worship of the congregation. Use [*Children in the Sanctuary*](#), #70250-02-924 through pcusastore.com or (800) 533-4371, as an additional resource. Introduce these rituals during "the gathering time" before rotation.

Just Eating? Practicing Our Faith at the Table

by Jennifer Halteman Schrock

Just Eating, providing a participant and a leader's guide, is a seven-session curriculum for congregations to explore the relationship between the way we eat and the way we live. The Presbyterian Hunger Program of the PC(USA) in partnership with Advocate for Health Care and Church World Service published the resource.

The study uses scripture, prayer and stories from the local and global community to explore five key aspects of our relationship with food that form our eating practices, as individuals and as faith communities.

Order through [Church Store](#) with these item numbers: Participant's Book, # 7436505362, \$4.00 each or 2 to 9 copies, \$3.00; Leader's Book, #7436505361, \$6.50; Middle School Version, #2543209360, \$10.00.

A small rural church of mostly adults with 2 or 3 children and a few youth

Using this resource would be a great opportunity to partner with an urban church. Create a 2 part series that would take place at the rural church and then at the urban church. Invite a Parish nurse to talk about "ministries of health" and good nutrition as an act of stewardship. Provide incentives for children and youth to sample "good" foods. Have adults sample foods that could reduce cholesterol, lower sodium, reduce sugar intake. Explore nutritional differences that may exist in urban and rural community life. Examine how each community could support better nutrition goals for members in each congregation.

An intergenerational retreat

With the focus on childhood obesity and malnutrition among the elderly, concerns about a healthy diet could connect both groups. Conversations could include information about eating disorders. In *Just Eating: Practicing Our Faith at the Table*, it suggests assessing your congregation's eating habits:

- Does your coffee hour always feature sugary sweets?
- Are options available for diabetics at potlucks?
- Are ingredients labeled for people with allergies?

Assess issues that concern youth: Is fast food available at the school(s)? What other choices do the students have for nutritional meals and snacks? What information is available to them concerning fast food and soft drinks? As an intergenerational group, how can you affect change in your community and school?

A mid-size multicultural church located in a declining urban area

This resource would be a great way to introduce the idea of partnering with other churches or planning your own program to set up a community garden. Youth and children would not only be helpful in preparing the space but would have an opportunity to see first hand how food becomes a gift from God. Creating community while caring for the food is an important action. In a multicultural ministry different ways of growing the same crops could be highlighted. Welcoming new members of the community into the community of the church would seem an automatic response. An after-worship lunch could showcase all the diversity in the crops and in the community.

Around the Moringa Tree, A Bible Study Curriculum

Created by Presbyterian Disaster Assistance and the Presbyterian Hunger Program, PC(USA)

This resource introduces the amazing Moringa Tree and how it provides nutrition, sustenance, and health for so many hungry people in God's world. A DVD is included, featuring Moringa work in Haiti and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Activities are written for elementary-aged children, with intergenerational participation encouraged.

Order through Presbyterian Distribution Service, (800) 524-2612, or store.pcusa.org, item #2541207022, \$10.

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Some of the suggestions for “take-home” exercises would work in a rural setting. Read Psalm 8 together. Make sure everyone has a Bible or a copy of the Psalm to take home. Talk about the God-given gifts that the writer illustrates in the Psalm. Ask these questions: What has God given to the mortals? Who are the mortals? What does it mean to be crowned with glory and honor? What kind of responsibility do mortals have for the creation? The take-home exercise talks out environmental projects that can be done in a group. Other activities might include a bonfire with marshmallows to look at the stars or a visit to a nearby planetarium.

An intergenerational retreat

A park setting for this retreat would be great! Begin the retreat with the reading of Genesis 1:11-13, the story of creation. One of the “creations” is the Moringa Tree, the tree of hope. Begin to learn the “The Amazing Moringa Song”. The DVD clip for Session 1 contains “The Extraordinary Ordinary Tree”. After watching the clip, go outside and identify some of the trees where you are; work in multi-generational groups.

A Kid Started It: Children's Educational Hunger Kit

From the Presbyterian Hunger Program, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

A Kid Started It is a boxed kit containing hunger curricula from the Presbyterian Hunger Program, Bread for the World, Church World Service, Heifer Project International, and World Food Day. It is geared for children in K - 6 grades.

Although no longer available through PDS or store.pcusa.org, check your area resource center or other churches in your area. They may have a kit to loan.

A small rural church of mostly adults with 2 or 3 children and a few youth

Animal Crackers is a resource produced by Heifer Project International that lifts up the concept of the global family. As an intergenerational series, tell the stories and use the activities that center around particular animals that help alleviate hunger for folks. Choose fish for Thailand or a pig for the Dominican Republic or a chicken for Cameroon and create a fundraiser for the group to purchase this animal. Using the theme of Noah's ark and the Heifer Project gift ark, a vacation Bible school could be easily planned.

An intergenerational retreat

Sponsor a retreat around Church World Service's Build a Better World I and II. During the retreat make plans to sponsor a group to participate in a CROP walk. To find out if a CROP walk is scheduled in your area, call (888) CWS-CROP or go online to www.churchworldservice.org. Have adults sponsor a child for the walk or other folks sponsor an adult/child team.

One of the stories from the curriculum is "Journey from Sudan" that tells the story of a long walk by a group of Sudanese boys in dangerous circumstances. With the use of international symbols and placards, use the "A Long Walk" Instruction spaces during your neighborhood journey, i.e. *wade across a river with crocodiles...* Or set up a long walk that incorporates 20th century dangers for the participants, i.e. *walking past the bully in the school yard*.

Schedule a "hunger-thon" weekend. Use *A Fast that Lasts* from the Presbyterian Hunger Program. This is a 24–30 hour fasting retreat. The *Hunger Has a Cure* video is three segments with bible study and games and activities as well. Adopt a mission project to keep participants moving and busy, such as taking a group of senior citizens to the grocery. At the end of the 24 hours, serve a simple break-the-fast meal and possibly invite that same group to join you!

A mid-size multicultural church located in a declining urban area

Make contact with an English as a second Language (ESL) group and invite them to a mid-week meal. After the meal, gather any children and provide an opportunity for them to participate in music activities—singing, orf instruments, etc. In the adult group, ask some of the immigrants to tell their stories, to express their joys and frustrations. Together use the "Offering of Letters" packet located in "Making Hunger History" from Bread for the World to write a letter to your congressperson about hunger issues as well as immigration issues. Return the children to the large group for some hymn singing and, of course, issue an invitation to join worship on Sunday.

A large 2000 member suburban church with classes for each age grouping

For summer church school "Is There Enough?" can be used as an intergenerational program as well as workshop rotation. It is targeted for preschool to upper elementary children and provides many hands-on opportunities for the children. Using the lesson (#2) on the "common good",

read the Exodus story about the spoiled “manna”. Play the manna distribution game that will deprive 2 children of their share. Talk about what God asks us all to do—share what we have. Then, substitute the manna with oatmeal cookies!

A mid-week program with teens and adults together plus a separate children’s program
Feeding Minds, Fighting Hunger curriculum produced by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the Feeding Minds, Fighting Hunger Partnership is a great mid-week option for children, youth and adults. There are three levels to the curriculum for children and youth, but adults could participate in the secondary level. Read the Story of Miquel’s Tomatoes; there are reproducible sheets for the children to color while listening. The story addresses the steps in the food system. The Food Systems Chart provides adults/teens with information to talk about the components of the system. Other suggestions and activities addressing food security are included. A good ending for this study would be to coincide with World Food Day, October 16 (or more information go to www.fao.org/wfd2008) or World Communion Sunday, the first Sunday in October.

We Believe Workshop
Congregational Ministries Publishing, PC(USA)

We Believe Workshop is an online library of Bible story curriculum in the rotation model format. It is sold in seven-workshop units per story or as individual workshops. Purchase a whole unit on a particular story or an individual workshop to enhance your own rotation Sunday school or other curriculum.

The online format is flexible—purchase one set to download and print as many leaders guides or workshop materials as your church needs. It is cost-effective and easy to use. *We Believe Workshop* stories are categorized online at store.pcusa.org under Old and New Testaments or by individual titles.

Go to webelieve.pcusa.org/we-believe/we-believe-workshop/ to view units in biblical order, to download samples, and for more information about pricing. Place your order at pcusastore.com.

A small rural church of mostly adults with 2 or 3 children and a few youth

Influenced by the liturgical calendar, *We Believe* makes the perfect scripture text for the “time with the children” during worship; additional materials from the workshop can continue that theme into the education hour.

A mid-size multicultural church located in a declining urban area

Use a midweek outreach program and, as in Joseph: God’s Dreamer, have the children experience moving from one culture to another.

A mid week program with teens and adults plus a separate children’s program

Use rotation for children with parallel themes for adults and youth.