

3rd Grade Bible Exploration

Hamline Church United
Methodist

3rd Grader's Name!



Dear families,

We are so excited to share these stories of our faith with you! The Bible started out as stories passed on from person to person before they were written down by hand, eventually printed on presses, and today are even available via app on our phones! No matter how the format has changed, the Bible remains the place where we learn the stories of the People of God, learn timeless truths about the nature of God, along with practical advice on how to care for and love one another in the world.

This packet has some resources and reminders about what the Bible is, how to navigate it, and ideas for how to think about the stories together. We hope that this gives you some tools to read the Bible together, and to ask questions about what the Bible means in our daily lives.

To parents and guardians:

Reading the Bible and learning about God's stories is something scholars, theologians, and clergy do their whole careers and they *still* have more to explore, so don't worry if you feel overwhelmed by the information here! Simply reading and wondering together is such a powerful thing, and your child will probably have questions or observations that you've never considered! Don't be afraid to say, "I don't know, let's see if we can find that answer together." You can always get in touch with Mariah, Heather, or me if you're looking for specific resources or have more questions.

We're excited to explore God's stories with you!

Peace,
Katie Morris

What are the parts of the Bible?

Read together:

The Bible is made up of different pieces, called books. There are 66 books of the Bible! These books are divided into two sections, called the Old Testament (or the Hebrew Bible) and the New Testament.

Explore!

The Old Testament (Hebrew Bible) is a collection of stories that weren't written down for a long time. People told the stories to their children from memory, then those children told their children, and so on. About 950 years before Jesus, people started writing down the stories of the Old Testament in the Hebrew language.

- Can you find the **first** book of the Old Testament?

- Can you find the **last** book of the Old Testament?

The New Testament stories were also told for a long time before they were written down. Many of the books were written down in the Greek language after Jesus died.

- Can you find the **first** book of the New Testament?

- Can you find the **last** book of the New Testament?

How do I read my Bible?

Read together:

The Bible is like a library you can hold in your hand. Each book has its own name and place in the Bible library. Some of the books give us instructions, some tell about history, some are songs or poems, some tell about Jesus, some are letters.

Because the Bible has so many books, there's a special way to find the scripture (or sentences) you're looking for.

1. The first thing a Bible reference tells us is which book in the Bible to look up. You can find a table of contents with all of the books in the front of your Bible.
2. The second thing it tells us is what chapter or part of the book to look for. The beginning of each chapter in the Bible is marked with a big number.
3. The last thing a Bible reference tells us is what verse or small part of the chapter to look for. Each verse has a small number near it.

Explore!

Let's practice!

1. Can you find Genesis 1:3?
2. What about Genesis 1:3-5?
3. How about Genesis 1:26-27, 31?

Genesis 1:3

book chapter verse

What does the Bible mean?

Read together:

There are a lot of different ways we can understand the Bible, and people don't always agree on the best way. Because the Bible has so many stories, there's a lot to think about! And remember – you don't have to figure it out alone! You can read with your family or friends, or people at church, and ask questions about it together.

Explore!

Here are some ways you can think about a Bible story after you've read it:

- **Create** – Use your favorite art supplies to draw or create what you read
- **Write** – Think about the scripture and write how it makes you feel, or questions you have
- **Play** – Play the story with toys, wikki stix, play-doh, or blocks
- **Research** – Find out: who wrote this scripture? When did they write it? Who was it for? What was it about? Why was it important to write about?
- **Sing** – Make up your own song to share the scripture
- **Ask** – What does this scripture mean to me today? How is God asking me to live? What is God saying to me?
- **Act** – Read the scripture out loud with your own creativity!
- **Wonder** – Be curious about the scripture, wondering what God might be showing you today. I wonder....
- **Pray** – What do you want to say to God about the scripture you are reading? What does God have to say to you about it? Say the scripture as your prayer.

Find Genesis 1:1-5

- Read these verses together.
- What is this passage about?
- Choose one of the ways to explore the story and do it!

Tools to Use My Bible

Read together:

Many Bibles have tools that help you to understand your Bible. They might be in the back, in the front, or within the pages of each book. These can help us understand some of the stories, words, and places that we read about in the Bible.

- Look at your Bible! What tools do you find?
 - Do you have a map?
 - Do you have a dictionary?
 - Do you have a topical index?
 - Do you have devotions?

Explore!

Let's practice using the tools!

- **Dictionary:** Find the dictionary in the back of your Bible
 - Find the word "gleaning." What does it mean? (write or draw the definition!)

 - Find the word "manna." What does it mean? (write or draw the definition!)

 - Find the word "tunic." What does it mean? (write or draw the definition!)

- **Topics:** Find the topic index in the back of your Bible
 - Find a topic that you're interested in and choose a scripture to read about it. What did you choose?

- **Maps:** Find the maps in the back of your Bible
 - Find these places on the map!
 - Sea of Galilee
 - Jerusalem
 - Bethlehem
 - Dead Sea
 - Israel
 - Jordan River
 - Find a place you've never heard of! What is it?

Make a Bible Bookmark

Read together:

Sometimes, you might want to mark special pages in your Bible. You can do this with a regular bookmark, or a special ribbon bookmark.

Explore!

Let's make a bookmark!

- Choose which kind of bookmark you'd like to make.
- If you want to make a single bookmark, choose a strip of paper that you can decorate. Draw or decorate it however you'd like!
- If you want to make a ribbon bookmark, follow the instructions below.

Ribbon bookmark:

1. Gather materials from the table. You need: a strip of paper, glue, scissors, and ribbon.
2. Fold your strip of paper in half, so the two ends are touching.
3. Open your strip of paper back up.
4. Add glue to the inside of one end of your strip.
5. Lay the end of your ribbons one at a time onto the glue (most of the ribbon should extend beyond the paper)
6. When all the ribbons are glued on, add glue to the side without ribbon.
7. Fold your strip again and close it up so that the glue is secure.
8. Press your strip under something heavy while it dries, then it's ready to use!