

This excellent resource uses the latest biblical insights, and images in stories told in simple inclusive language. The realism of the illustrations is a powerful addition to the text for both children and adults alike. Specific stories to accompany the week's lessons are noted throughout the *At Home Leaflet* where applicable. To order *The Family Story Bible*, visit www.woodlakebooks.com, or call Wood Lake Publishing Customer Service 1.800.663.2775.

Here is a recipe you might like to make together as a family and share. Put some in a package and deliver them to a neighbour who is homebound.

Apple Cinnamon Rolls

500 mL / 2 cups all-purpose flour	2 mL / 1/2 tsp. salt	
20 mL / 4 tsp. baking powder	160 mL / 2/3 cup milk	
2 tsp. (10 mL) sugar	125 mL / 1/2 cup shortening	
2 mL / 1/2 tsp. cream of tartar	250 mL / 1 cup finely chopped peeled apple	
Soft butter or margarine.	Brown sugar and cinnamon.	
Thin butter icing for glaze if desired.		

Sift together flour, baking powder, sugar, cream of tartar and salt. Cut in shortening until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Add milk all at once and stir until mixture clings together. Turn out on lightly floured surface and knead dough ten times. Roll out into a rectangle with dough about 5mm / 1/4 inch thick. Spread on a thin layer of butter, top with a thin layer of brown sugar, spread apples over this then sprinkle with cinnamon. Roll up jellyroll style and cut into sections 4 cm / 1 1/2 inches thick. Turn rolls on their sides on a greased cookie sheet and bake for 15 minutes at 220°C / 425°F. Glaze with a thin butter icing while still warm if desired.



In the Unit 1 logo, “Together on the Journey” we see people of all ages on the move. For many congregations, this is a time of regathering after people have been away on summer holidays, camping, or busy with visitors. The logo might reflect the dispersed community drawing together. But as we look closer we may notice the people aren’t wearing coats or carrying suitcases. How might these represent refugees and those who are displaced in our world? In the background we see fields. Are they growing? Or have they been harvested? Might they suggest those leaving famine, or those leaving abundance – leaving everything they have known behind? Are they worried or excited about the future? Where do we fit into this unfolding story? Who are we on the journey with and how will we include and welcome those who are new or different from us? How will we acknowledge and celebrate that we, with God, are together on the journey? We conclude the unit by returning to the theme of abundance. We hear the story of when the people finally arrived in the promised land. Concerned that they would forget, Moses gives instructions for a celebration that was to be observed each year in which the people recall the story of their ancestors’ release from slavery and give thanks to God who is ever-present with them..

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| September | 3 | Risky Business |
| | 10 | On the Move (<i>Reconvenanting Sunday</i>) |
| | 17 | Jubilation |
| | 24 | Abundant Grace |
| October | 1 | God, Where Are You? (<i>Worldwide Communion</i>) |
| | 8 | Lift Up Your Hearts (<i>Thanksgiving</i>) |
| | or | Ground Rules (<i>USA</i>) |

A word about the At Home Leaflet...

The *Whole People of God* curriculum is based on the Revised Common Lectionary, which is a schedule of 4 scripture passages to be read in worship each Sunday.

The *At Home Leaflets* are designed to give some background to each week's theme, to facilitate follow-up discussion in the home as well as provide ideas for family activities and projects that build from the lessons. Users of the leaflet are encouraged to choose those activities that best suit them and add others of their own. (See article on back page.)

It is hoped that all members of the congregation will use the pak to gain some background on the lectionary passages, be informed on what the children in their congregation are studying, and explore for themselves the ideas and activities which are an extension of that Sunday's scripture readings. The leaflet is also useful for doing some initial reading and preparing for upcoming worship and adult study sessions. The passage on which the children's lesson is based is marked with an asterisk (*).



Week 1 – September 3, 2017

Risky Business

- Exodus 3:1-15
- Psalm 105:1-6, 23-26, 45c
- Romans 12:9-21
- Matthew 16:21-28

Aim: **To hear the story of God's call to Moses.**

Background

As Christians, we are often called to place ourselves at risk for the sake of others: to reach out to help others at cost to ourselves, to speak out for justice and fairness at the risk of ridicule, to respond to others' questions about our beliefs and core values, even though we are still working them out in our own minds. All of our readings today speak about the risk involved in trying to respond to God's call, and live in God's way.

Faith Sharing:

1. Read "Moses Kills a Man" pp. 77-78 in the Family Story Bible, and "Moses Goes Back to Egypt" (pp. 79-80 in the same book). Talk together about these stories. What are the sad parts of the stories? What are the joyful parts? Notice that God is with us through it all – not necessarily cheering in one part or another, but simply being with us.
2. What are situations that make you annoyed? What might you do about them? Talk as a family about an issue of concern you might address together – such as cleaning up litter in a local park, or planning a picnic to helping people in your neighbourhood get to know one another.
3. Moses encountered God in a bush that was "burning up but was not consumed." Where are places you feel that God is especially close to you? What do you think God says to us sometimes? What might you do to respond?

the bounty, we can soon forget or ignore the source of all this goodness and fail to give thanks. Often we do not even fully recognize our abundance. We don't feel grateful and instead of sharing our blessings with others, we find ourselves clutching what we have and longing for more! As we enter into the celebration of Thanksgiving let us remember the sacredness of all life created by God. May we be able to respond with genuine gratitude, expressed in action – not just words.

Faith Sharing

1. Talk about the two parts of the word Thanksgiving, identifying the part that is often overlooked. As a family commit yourself to a Thanksgiving project to put your thanks into action.
2. Plan to share your Thanksgiving dinner with someone who might otherwise be alone. Invite the whole family to share in its preparation and hosting. Have a special Thanksgiving prayer/grace. Ask each person to contribute one line. "Thank you God for _____."

Faith Sharing in the Family

How can we nurture faith within in our families, especially when we all lead such hectic lives? The important thing is to be simple. Use the moments when they arise.

Simple rituals such as asking a blessing before each meal, and praying with your younger children at bedtime is a lot more important than you could ever imagine. (Talk with God together about your day – thanking God for specific joys, asking forgiveness for things botched, and remembering others in God's human family.) Read a Bible story at bedtime, from a book such as *The Family Story Bible*.

Some families have a special Sunday banner such as "This is the day that the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it." They bring it out at sundown on Saturday and hang it in a special place. This reminder helps us to prepare for the time of worship that is coming – worship on the first day of the week, in remembrance of Easter.

Set aside time (usually the same time every week works best) to reflect on the theme for the week. Many families tell us that Sunday supper works best for them, as worship earlier in the day and the lunch conversation has already got them thinking, and rituals over the supper meal make it real in the family setting. Having a special table center or candle helps to identify this special time each week. Choose to do one of the suggested activities from this leaflet, or one of your own ideas. Use the recipe provided and work together to create a special treat for sharing at one of the weekly family worship times.

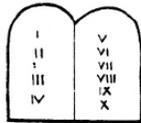
Simple is best. Have fun and enjoy each other. Don't become discouraged. Remember that every day is a new beginning. And if you discover some really neat family celebration ideas, please share them with us so we can share them with others. (www.wholepeopleofgod.com)

- If we are to share in God's power we must also be prepared to act on God's intentions. Discuss as a family what you might do together or individually to work in partnership with God. (*Childcare for a single Mom, vigorously recycle – not just when it's convenient, have a very simple dinner two nights a week and give the money you save to World Development, write letters for Amnesty International, etc.*)

Week 6—October 8, 2017

Ground Rules (for those not observing Canadian Thanksgiving)

- Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20 *
- Psalm 19
- Philippians 3:4b-14
- Matthew 21:33-46



Aim: To celebrate our commitment to live in a diverse community.

Background

Today we celebrate the Ten Commandments given to the people of Israel in the desert, which describe God's way and enable us to live together with respect and harmony and wholeness. And we affirm the rituals by which we act out who we are, celebrating that God has given us *torah* – a sacred way that enables us to live together as a community in harmony and justice.

Faith Sharing

- Read together the story of "The Ten Commandments" from *The Family Story Bible*, pages 88–89.
- Talk about the rules you have in your family. Why have they been chosen? What are the advantages of having these rules? Talk about the ways in which the world would be better if all people followed God's rules.
- Take a trip to the local library and find information to share on people from a culture in another part of the world. Learn a few of their words, try a few of their recipes, find out what they wear and do for fun. Look for and discuss the similarities to yourselves as well as differences. Learn about ways they govern themselves as a community.

Week 6 – October 8, 2017

Remembering to Give Thanks (Canadian Thanksgiving)

- Deuteronomy 8:7-18
- Psalm 65
- 2 Corinthians 9:6-15
- Luke 17:11-19



Aim: To remember and respond to what God has done.

Background

Ours is a God of abundance, yet so many in our world suffer from deprivation of the basic necessities of life. How can this be so? On this Thanksgiving Sunday, our biblical passages express wonder and joy at the goodness and abundance of God's creation. Yet, with all

Week 2 – September 10, 2017

On the Move (Recovenanting Sunday)

- Exodus 12:1-14 *
- Psalm 149
- Romans 13:8-14
- Matthew 18:15-20



Aim: To prepare with God to start something new.

Background

As we begin a new season in the life of our congregation and a new unit in the curriculum, we join the lectionary in the middle of one of the most important cycle of stories within the Judeo-Christian tradition – the stories of the liberation of the people of Israel from slavery in Egypt. These are stories that Jesus would have heard over and over again as a child. These are stories that had a tremendous influence upon the early interpretations of the meaning and purpose of Jesus' death and resurrection. If you have not been following the lectionary over the summer months, reading the book of Exodus from the beginning will give you a sense of the tremendous drama which has been building towards the story of the first Passover, the major focus of this Sunday's materials.

All of today's readings, different as they are, concern the building up of community. As we begin a new year, recovenanting together as a church community, we remember that we are together on a journey – a journey to discover who we are and whose we are.

Faith Sharing

- Review the story of Moses and Miriam and the Hebrew people by reading pages 73–80 from *The Family Story Bible*. Talk about how children are important in this story.
- Read together "The Hebrews leave Egypt" from *The Family Story Bible*, pages 81–84. Talk about how Jewish people still celebrate this Passover meal, and remember this time when God saved the people.
- Look together at the logo for this unit. Talk about journeys you have undertaken as a family, including journeys your ancestors might have taken to journey to a new land, if that is part of your story. How might you or others in your family have known God was with you in all your journeying? Look at a map or a world globe and explore places you have traveled.

Week 3 – September 17, 2017

Jubilation

Exodus 14:19-31*
Psalm 114 or
Exodus 15:1b-11, 20-21
Romans 14:1-12
Matthew 18:21-35



Aim: **To celebrate with the Hebrew people that God is always with us.**

Background

At the center of the life of any community you will find three essential ingredients: a collection of stories, ways to remember and celebrate these stories, and ways to live out and explore the present meaning of the stories. Today the lectionary readings reflect each of these aspects of community life. We have a central story of God's saving presence in history. Then we have both a song and a dance with which to retell and celebrate the story. And finally we have two passages that are concerned with how we must live if we are to be participants in the great story of liberation in our own day.

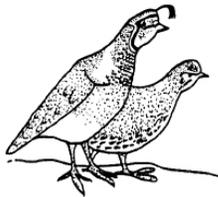
Faith Sharing

1. Read together "A long, long, journey" from *The Family Story Bible*, pages 84–85 or Exodus 15:1b-11, 20-21.
2. As we begin a new church school year, we renew our Christian commitment to learn and to serve God together in the community of the church. What is God calling your family to do now? What commitment will you make as a family to continue to learn and grow in your faith? Talk about some of the ideas found in the article "Faith Sharing in the Family" (see page 8). Add your own ideas. Write down your decisions. Have each person add their name.
3. One way of sharing our story is through music. Spend some time together singing or listening to the songs of our faith. You might use a sung grace at mealtime or sing a song to your children as you tuck them into bed each night. With older children discuss the stories or meaning behind some of the songs. Teach your children a favorite hymn from your childhood.

Week 4 – September 24, 2017

Abundant Grace

Exodus 16:2-15 *
Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45
Philippians 1:21-30
Matthew 20:1-16



Aim: **To remember God provides for us in hard times.**

Background

All our readings today deal with questions about God's presence with us. The children will explore how the Israelites were frightened and insecure in their new life wandering

in the desert. They complain to Moses about not having enough food and Moses speaks with God (prays). God does not respond to the people's complaints with anger or hurt, but with a compassionate and listening ear. The "miracle" of the manna and quail becomes a sign of God's caring and presence with them. The children will discuss how God hears our fears and concerns today and responds, sometimes in unexpected ways or in unexpected places. We may need to see with new eyes to find God in new ways.

Faith Sharing

1. All of us, at one time or another, have fears and concerns which can be dealt with more easily if they are shared with someone else. Share with your children times when you have been afraid and what helped you. How was God part of this? Encourage them to share their fears and concerns. Listen caringly without judgment or interruption.
2. Take a walk or a hike together enjoying the beauty of the coming fall. Gather some colorful leaves for a table center or wax them so they will keep. Place them, while still soft, between two layers of waxed paper. Place the waxed paper between layers of newspaper then press with a hot iron until the wax has melted sufficiently to seal the leaves. Carefully remove the top layer of newspaper then peel back the waxed paper. Arrange them in a pot or bowl. Talk about how this can remind us of God's presence with us (seeing God's love reflected in creation).
3. Make some biscuits and serve them warm with honey. As you are enjoying the snack read "Special Food" from *The Family Story Bible*, pages 86-87 and talk about how this might have been a similar taste to the manna that the people of Israel ate in the desert. Discuss what part we need to play to make sure that all God's people have enough to eat and clean water to drink.

Week 5 – October 1, 2017

God, Where Are You?

Exodus 17:1-7 *
Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16
Philippians 2:1-13
Matthew 21:23-32



Aim: **seek signs of God's presence.**

Background

In today's readings we continue to live with the question: Is God with us? The theme which emerges is that not only is God with us, God is in us, too. We look for God's actions or interventions, then cast blame when we cannot recognize God's presence. But God is present and ready to act creatively and powerfully through us, if we would only recognize it.

Faith Sharing

1. Look again at "Special Food" from *The Family Story Bible*. Have children tell you the story this time. Read the last two paragraphs again.
2. Talk about how important water is to our lives. In what ways might we be better stewards of water in our home? (*Shorter showers, don't let tap run when peeling vegetables or brushing teeth, etc.*)