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ENDURING BELIEFS
OF THE
CHRISTIAN FAITH

SUNDAY SCHOOL QUARTERLY TEACHER'S GUIDE

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Winter Quarter 2025/26

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SUNDAY SCHOOL QUARTERLY TEACHER'S GUIDE

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THE COMBINED TEACHER'S GUIDE

WINTER QUARTER 2025/26

DECEMBER • JANUARY • FEBRUARY

Christian Education Department
Rev. Garland F. Pierce, Executive Director
Bishop Harry L. Seawright, Chair

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BASIC SUPPLIES

Bible dictionary	writing paper
Bible pictures and maps	DVD recorder/player
CD players	milk crates
chart paper	paper – letter, drawing
Christian music – books, sheets, recordings	pencils, pens, markers
Christian videos and DVDs	poster boards
crayons	robes, scarves
digital camera	old clothing
digital camcorder	scissors, glue, paste
drawing paper	video player

The Teacher's Guide
Liberating Faith Studies
Winter Quarter: December 2025 – February 2026
Prepared by Rev. Dr. Garland F. Pierce

Lesson 1**December 7, 2025**

The Holy Scriptures
(Second Sunday of Advent)

Lesson Scripture: Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 1:8-9; 2 Kings 22:8-20; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Psalm 19:7-14; Luke 24:25-32; Acts 17:10-12; 2 Timothy 3:14-17

Focus Scripture: Psalm 19:7-11; 2 Timothy 3:14-15

Key Verses: All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that the person of God may be proficient, equipped for every good work. 2 Timothy 3:16-17

KEY TERMS

- **Scripture (skrip-chər)** – The sacred writings of the Bible, divinely inspired and authoritative for faith and life.
- **Inspired (in-spīrd)** – Breathed by God; conveying divine guidance through human authors.
- **Righteousness (rīt-chəs-nəs)** – Living in right relationship with God and neighbor; moral integrity.
- **Meditate (med-i-tāt)** – To thoughtfully reflect on God's Word, internalizing its meaning for daily life.
- **Conduit (kän-dōōt)** – A channel through which something flows; here, scripture is the conduit of God's voice.

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Discover the role of scripture in revealing who God is and what God desires for their lives.
2. Listen to scripture as though they were hearing God's loving voice.
3. Look to God's Word for guidance in the choices they are making.

Teaching Strategies

1. It may be important and interesting to highlight the poetic nature of Psalm 19. 2 Timothy is more prose and instructive but both the psalm and epistle stress effectively the divine purpose of God's Word.
2. Langston Hughes' poem, "Let America Be America Again," might be read aloud and discussed.
3. Some discussion questions regarding Harriet Tubman:
 - How did scripture give her clarity and courage?
 - In what ways can we let scripture guide our decisions and service today?
 - How does Psalm 19's imagery of guidance relate to her journey?
4. Some possible activities to promote reflection and/or discussion:
 - Have participants reflect silently: "Identify one area of your life where God's Word could give direction this week."
 - Small-group discussion: Share practical ways scripture could be applied.
 - Encourage journaling or note-taking for personal growth.

Resources: Langston Hughes' poem, "Let America Be America Again" if your class wants to observe devotional moments related to the liturgical season of Advent, you may need an Advent candle set and Advent resources:



Lesson 2

December 14, 2025

Our Heavenly Father (Third Sunday of Advent)

Lesson Scripture: Exodus 34:4-7; Psalm 103:1-5, 10-14; Isaiah 40:27-31; Matthew 6:24-34; John 3:3-6; 4:20-24; 8:40-47; Romans 2:2-11;

8:14-17; 1 John 4:7-16

Focus Scripture: Matthew 6:24-34

Key Verse: “Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today’s trouble is enough for today.” Matthew 6:34

KEY TERMS

- **Mammon** – Wealth or material possessions; often personified as a competing master.
- **Anxious/Worry** – Mental unrest or preoccupation over what may happen, especially regarding daily needs.
- **Kingdom of God** – God’s reign manifested in justice, love, mercy, and daily life.
- **Materialism** – The value placed on acquiring wealth or possessions rather than seeking God.
- **Provision** – God’s faithful care to meet human needs.
- **Capitalism (as referenced in case study)** – An economic system emphasizing private ownership and profit, sometimes linked to materialistic greed.

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Survey the totality of God’s provision for the needs of humankind.
2. Trust God to such an extent that they are released from their worries.
3. Give thanks for God’s provision and help those in the community who do not have their basic needs met.

Teaching Strategies

1. Ask learners to silently identify one personal worry they carry. Write a few examples on the board. Highlight that Jesus’ teaching directly addresses these daily concerns and emphasizes God’s provision.
2. Discuss briefly the Advent context: a season of preparation and trust in God’s promises, reinforcing the lesson’s theme of reliance on divine care.
3. Encourage learners to compare the teachings of today’s lesson scripture with examples of God’s provision in Exodus 16 (manna) and 1 Kings 17 (widow of Zarephath).
4. Ask reflective questions: “How do we recognize God’s care today?” and “How might worry prevent us from seeing God’s provision?”

5. Share the story of the Great Migration when African Americans moved north seeking better opportunities, often leaving behind hardships but relying on faith in God's provision. Emphasize how communities relied on mutual support and trust in God to survive economic and social challenges.
6. Summary of Isabel Wilkerson's "Warmth of Other Suns," which focuses on the Great Migration:



7. Encourage learners to consider: How does revisiting past faith practices guide our responses to present anxieties?
8. Encourage learners to create personal worry lists, identifying areas where God's provision can replace anxiety.
9. Guide reflection on spending habits: differentiating essential needs, godly investments, and nonessential consumption.

Resources: Whiteboard or chart paper and markers;

if your class wants to observe devotional moments related to the liturgical season of Advent, you may need an Advent candle set and Advent resources:



Lesson 3

December 21, 2025

**Christ the Savior
(Fourth Sunday of Advent)**

Lesson Scripture: Luke 2:11, 30-32; 15:3-7; John 3:14-17; 10:9-11, 14-

16, 27-28; Acts 3:1-18; Romans 5:1-11; Philippians 2:5-11; 2 Timothy 1:9-10

Focus Scripture: Luke 15:3-7; Romans 5:6-10

Key Verse: If while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more surely, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life. Romans 5:10

KEY TERMS

- **Paradox (PAH-ruh-doks)** – A statement that appears contradictory but reveals a deeper truth.
- **Reconciliation (ree-KON-sil-ee-AY-shun)** – Restoration of relationship between God and humanity.
- **Sacrificial Lamb (sak-RIH-fih-shuhl lam)** – Image of Jesus' atoning death for humanity's sins.
- **Shepherd (SHEP-erd)** – One who guides, protects, and seeks the lost (primarily sheep).
- **Justification (juhs-tih-fih-KAY-shun)** – Being made right with God through faith.
- **Salvation (sal-VAY-shun)** – Deliverance from sin and its consequences through Jesus Christ.
- **Incarnation (in-kar-NAY-shun)** – God becoming human in the person of Jesus Christ, fully divine and fully human, to accomplish salvation for humanity.

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Decipher the paradoxical images of Jesus as both "shepherd" and "sacrificial lamb."
2. Express gratitude for the ways in which they have experienced Christ's rescue.
3. Resist complacency in resolving conflict by boldly enacting Christ's reconciling power.

Teaching Strategies

1. Use a shepherd and lamb metaphor to discuss God's dual role. Encourage students to name modern examples in their communities.
2. Facilitate small group discussion around the case study; connect personal experiences with biblical images.

3. Encourage learners to journal and share reflections; this fosters both introspection and communal learning.
4. Given that it is the last Sunday of Advent and Christmas is approaching, this lesson can also be linked to the shepherds' part in the good news of the birth of the *Great Shepherd* and *Lamb of God*, Jesus.

Resources:

If your class wants to observe devotional moments related to the liturgical season of Advent, you may need an Advent candle set and Advent resources



The Teacher's Guide Senior Lessons

Winter Quarter: December 2025 – February 2026

Prepared by Rev. Dr. Teneramie C. Jiménez

Lesson 1

December 7, 2025

The Holy Scriptures

Lesson Scripture: Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 1:8-9; 2 Kings 22:8-20; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Psalm 19:17-14; Luke 24:25-32; Acts 17:10-12; 2 Timothy 3:14-17

Focus Scripture: Psalm 19:7-11; 2 Timothy 3:14-15

Key Verses: “All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that the person of God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.” 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Words to Know

- **Decrees** – Official orders or truths that are dependable and trustworthy.
- **Precepts** – Rules or guidelines that help us know what is right and just in everyday life.
- **Fear (of the Lord)** – A deep respect, awe, and reverence for God, not fear like being scared.
- **Ordinances** – God’s rulings or judgments; they are fair, true, and completely right.
- **Transgression** – A serious wrongdoing or rebellion against God’s ways.
- **Insolent (or Proud Thoughts)** – Arrogant or proud thoughts or behaviors.
- **Sacred Writings** – God’s inspired Word passed down through generations.

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. **Know God** – Understand how the Bible reveals who God is and how scripture serves as a trustworthy guide for our daily lives.
2. **Love God** – Explore how loving God means valuing God’s Word, listening to it, and allowing it to shape our hearts and decisions.

3. **Serve God** – Recognize that applying God's Word in how we live, speak, and care for others is one of the most powerful ways we can serve God.

Teaching Strategies

1. Today is the second Sunday of Advent (Peace). Have the youth look up information on the liturgical seasons and ask the leaders in the church about the Advent wreath.
2. The use of social media is encouraged throughout this quarter. Remind the students of any social media protocols they are familiar with from school or any implemented in church. Each lesson has a QR code for youth to scan and enjoy the musical selection. The youth will also scan and search for the flags to learn more about the countries.
3. Challenge the youth to learn the **Key Verse** by memory.
4. This quarter, the **Sankofa** sections will encourage global awareness by introducing the many countries where AME churches exist. Have the youth Google the country flags and encourage them to look up on social media the AME churches in those countries. If you have time and resources, have the youth draw, print, or create maps around the world identified in the lessons and display them in your classroom. The maps can also be placed where they can later post facts learned about the countries and activities from youth in the AME churches listed. Let the maps be an ongoing project to explore. This is an awesome time to have them expand their global awareness. They may even want to visit different countries and learn about the cultures and activities of other AME youth.
5. This lesson can be timed for 30, 45, or 60 minutes. The times next to the activities reflect a 45-minute lesson. If you need more or less, simply adjust the times by adding or subtracting 15 minutes. The lessons are straightforward with relevant questions to discuss in groups or as a whole. Depending on your group size and setting, here is a suggested lesson breakdown:
 - (5 minutes) **Introduction**. Opening prayer and have students share if the introduction encourages questions or concerns.
 - (10 minutes) **Bible Story**. Have volunteers read scriptures

“round robin,” three or four verses each or one person read entire passage. Review vocabulary and read/discuss **Bible Story**. The **Bible Story** has three sections relative to *Know God, Love God, Serve God*). Have students break up into three groups and report back or discuss each section as a group depending on size of class. Answer questions.

- (10 minutes) **Sankofa**. Have students discuss countries they would like to visit and search for information on social media and internet. If time permits, let a few of them share what they discovered. Let youth tell if they visited any of the countries in lesson.
- (15 minutes) **Real Talk, Faith Walk**. This section allows for the youth to express what is going on in their lives. Allow them to give examples of real-life situations and allow fellow youth to share if they can offer advice and apply to real life.
- (5 minutes) **Summary and Closing Devotions**. Recap/summarize lesson with one or three volunteers. Scan QR code and listen to music. Ask for volunteer to pray or pray collectively with closing prayer in lesson.

Lesson 2

December 14, 2025

Our Heavenly Father

Lesson Scripture: Exodus 34:4-7; Psalm 103:1-5, 10-14; Isaiah 40:27-31; Matthew 6:24-34; John 3:3-6; 4:20-24; 8:40-47; Romans 2:2-11; 8:14-17; 1 John 4:7-16

Focus Scripture: Matthew 6:24-34

Key Verse: “Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today’s trouble is enough for today.” Matthew 6:34

Words to Know

- **Serve** – To be loyal to someone or follow something. The scripture tells us we can’t serve both God and money at the same time.
- **Worry** – Stress adds anxiety about things you are not able to control. You cannot worry about the future, money, or what others may think of you.

- **Kingdom of God** – Living God's way where his words lead your life. It is not just about heaven in the beyond, it is how you live now with God as your guide.
- **Righteousness** – Doing what is right in God's eyes. This is when a person is kind, fair, and faithful.

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. **Know God** – Understand that God is a loving and faithful Father who knows our needs and invites us to trust God instead of worrying.
2. **Love God** – Learn how choosing to let go of fear and worry is one way we show love and trust in God's care and presence.
3. **Serve God** – Discover that living without worry allows us to focus on serving others and following God's purpose for our lives with peace and confidence.

Teaching Strategies

1. Today is the third Sunday of Advent (Joy). Have the youth look up information on the liturgical seasons and ask the leaders in the church about the Advent wreath.
2. The use of social media is encouraged throughout this quarter. Remind the students of any social media protocols they are familiar with from school or any implemented in church. Each lesson has a QR code for youth to scan and enjoy the musical selection. The youth will also scan and search for the flags to learn more about the countries.
3. Challenge the youth to learn the **Key Verse** by memory.
4. This quarter, the **Sankofa** sections will implement global awareness by introducing the many countries where AME churches exist. Have the youth Google the country flags and encourage them to look up on social media the AME churches in those countries. See **Teaching Strategies** in Lesson 1 for further breakdown.
5. This lesson can be timed for 30, 45, or 60 minutes. See **Teaching Strategies** in Lesson 1 for further breakdown.

Lesson 3

December 21, 2025

Christ the Savior

Lesson Scripture: Luke 2:11, 30-32; 15:3-7; John 3:14-17; 10:9-11, 14-

16, 27-28; Acts 3:1-18; Romans 5:1-11; Philippians 2:5-11; 2 Timothy 1:9-10

Focus Scripture: Luke 15:3-7; Romans 5:6-10

Key Verse: If while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more surely, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life. Romans 5:10

Words to Know

- **Repent** – To turn away from doing wrong and choose to follow God instead.
- **Righteous** – Living in a way that pleases God or being made right with God.
- **Justified** – Being made right with God, as if your record of wrongs has been cleared.
- **Reconciled** – Being brought back into a good relationship, like making peace after a fight.
- **Wrath** – God's anger against sin and evil, not random rage but justice against wrongdoing.

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. **Know God** – Learn that God sent Jesus, the *Good Shepherd*, to find and rescue us, and that through him we are no longer lost but fully known and deeply loved.
2. **Love God** – Understand that Jesus' sacrifice shows how much God loves us, and that our response should be to trust him, follow him, and live like he matters.
3. **Serve God** – Discover that being saved by Christ means sharing his love with others, helping people feel seen, safe, and secure in God's care.

Teaching Strategies

1. Today is the fourth Sunday of Advent (Love). Have the youth look up information on the liturgical seasons and ask the leaders in the church about the Advent wreath. This may be the Sunday that the church school or church will observe Christmas celebrations.
2. The use of social media is encouraged throughout this quarter. Remind the students of any social media protocols they are familiar with from

school or any implemented in church. Each lesson has a QR code for youth to scan and enjoy the musical selection. The youth will also scan and search for the flags to learn more about the countries.

3. Challenge the youth to learn the **Key Verse** by memory.
4. This quarter, the **Sankofa** sections will encourage global awareness by introducing the many countries where AME churches exist. Have the youth Google the country flags and encourage them to look up on social media the AME churches in those countries. See **Teaching Strategies** in Lesson 1 for further breakdown.
5. This lesson can be timed for 30, 45, or 60 minutes. See **Teaching Strategies** in Lesson 1 for further breakdown.

The Teacher's Guide
Intermediate Lessons
Winter Quarter: December 2025 – February 2026
Prepared by Dr. Kabrina Bass

Lesson 1**December 7, 2025**

The Holy Scriptures
(Second Sunday of Advent)

Lesson Scripture: Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 1:8-9; 2 Kings 22:8-20; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Psalm 19:7-14; Luke 24:25-32; Acts 17:10-12; 2 Timothy 3:14-17

Focus Scripture: Psalm 19:7-11; 2 Timothy 3:14-15

Key Verses: All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that the person of God may be proficient, equipped for every good work. 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Vocabulary

- **Torah (TOHR-ah)** – Hebrew word for “law” or “instruction,” especially the first five books of the Bible.
- **Precepts (PREE-septs)** – Commandments or principles intended as rules of conduct.
- **Righteousness (RAHY-chuhs-nis)** – Living rightly according to God’s standards; justice.
- **Inspired (in-SPAHY-erd)** – God-breathed; something given by divine influence.
- **Scripture (SKRIP-cher)** – Sacred writings, especially those of the Bible.

Introduction

Welcome each participant by name and introduce the winter quarter focus: “Our Holy God and the Holy Scriptures.” Explain that for the next few weeks, the class will explore how scripture reveals God’s character, offers guidance, and equips believers to live purposefully.

Reinforce the idea of Advent, a traditional season to prepare for the coming of Christ. Each Sunday during Advent is focused on Christ’s anticipated

birth and humanity's preparation. As we prepare, each Sunday a candle is lit and a prayer shared, we reflect on the concepts of HOPE, PEACE, JOY, and LOVE. The second Sunday's focus is PEACE.

In our tradition, scripture plays a significant role in our spiritual readiness.

Ask: "Have you ever relied on a map – paper or digital – to get you somewhere? What happened when you didn't have one?" Use their responses to pivot to today's lesson: God's Word is our life map.

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand how scripture equips us for life's decisions and challenges. (Knowing)
2. Develop a personal connection with scripture as a guide and source of hope. (Loving)
3. Apply God's Word as a life map in daily situations. (Serving)

Teaching Strategies

Introduction

Ask: "If you could carry only one map to guide your entire life, what kind of map would you need?" (Pause, allow time for participants to share.) Share the metaphor of the Bible as a life map and connect it to how GPS apps guide us in real time. Scripture can do the same spiritually. Have a volunteer read the lesson title. Invite youth to discuss whether the Bible feels like a map to them personally.

Bible Story

Read aloud Psalm 19:7-11 and 2 Timothy 3:14-15 (or assign readers). **Ask:** "What stands out to you in these verses?" (Pause) **Summarize:** Psalm 19 describes the beauty and trustworthiness of God's Word. Paul's letter to Timothy emphasizes scripture's usefulness in shaping a life of faith. **Invite** participants to break into small groups and assign each group one of the five descriptions from Psalm 19: perfect, trustworthy, right, radiant, pure. Ask them to define it and give an example from life.

Debrief: "How does scripture function as a life map when you're lost or unsure?"

Life Application

Share stories from AME Church history of how the Word has been used for liberation and endurance (e.g., hush harbors, sermon traditions). **Ask:**

What voices do you trust to guide your life right now: TikTok, parents, teachers, influencers, scripture? **Invite** participants to reflect quietly or journal about one area where they need more direction from God's Word. Share if comfortable.

Summary

Lead with this statement: "Scripture helps us understand God's heart and helps us to walk in purpose." **Discuss:** the difference between knowing someone and loving someone. (Allow participant's time to discuss.) **Ask:** What does it mean to know scripture? Pause then **Ask:** What does it look like to love scripture? Then, "How does your relationship with scripture influence your relationship with God?" Review the reflection questions and select 2-3 to discuss.

Invite youth to complete the handout (**Appendix: Applying God's Word to Life**). After the matching activity, ask:

- Which scripture surprised you the most?
- Were any hard to apply? Why?
- Where do you turn in scripture when you're lost or confused?

Emphasize the idea of scripture being relational, not just information, but formation.

Closing Devotions

Invite youth to write one verse that encourages them on a notecard or phone wallpaper.

Resources:

- Bibles or printouts of the printed texts
- Chart paper or whiteboard
- **Appendix: Applying God's Word to Life** handout
- Video clip:
What is Advent - <https://youtu.be/Hsl-z60WEa4?si=B14DupfxXj6uj5kj> (4 min)
Peace - <https://bibleproject.com/videos/shalom-peace> (4 min)
The story of the Bible - https://youtu.be/7_CGP-12AE0?si=wQWwIzOji2WyoNN9 (5 min)
- Advent - <http://www.iamame.org/worship-resources-2/> (clipart, AME resources)

<https://bibleproject.com/guides/advent/> Bible Project

- Supplies: Paper, pens, markers, digital device (optional)

Lesson 2

December 14, 2025

Our Heavenly Father (Third Sunday of Advent)

Lesson Scripture: Exodus 34:4-7; Psalm 103:1-5, 10-14; Isaiah 40:27-31; Matthew 6:24-34; John 3:3-6; 4:20-24; 8:40-47; Romans 2:2-11; 8:14-17; 1 John 4:7-16

Focus Scripture: Matthew 6:24-34

Key Verse: “Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today’s trouble is enough for today.” Matthew 6:34

Vocabulary

- **Mammon (MAM-uhn)** – Aramaic for “wealth” or “what is trusted in.” Used by Jesus to describe wealth as a rival master to God.
- **Righteousness (RAHY-chuhs-nis)** – Living in right relationship with God, others, and self. Also refers to justice and equity.
- **Provision (pruh-VIZH-uhn)** – The act of supplying what is needed.
- **Worry (WUR-ee)** – Persistent concern or anxiety about something uncertain or uncontrollable.
- **Kingdom of God** – God’s reign of justice, peace, and love on earth and in heaven.

Introduction

Welcome students to the class. Explain that it’s the third Sunday of Advent; remind them that last week we explored the importance of scripture. Share that when we read about people choosing joy and hope in God’s promises despite their circumstances, the meaning of Advent takes on deeper meaning. The third Sunday focuses on *Joy*.

Remind participants that some people are never satisfied with what they have and spend their lives striving for great wealth. **Ask:** What is more important than great wealth?

Invite participants to name one thing they’ve worried about recently (allow written or verbal options). **Explain** that worry is common, even in the Bible. Jesus reminds us that instead of being consumed by worry, we can trust

God's care. Our goal isn't to ignore life's challenges, but to learn how to face them with faith. Advent is a time of preparation: letting go of fear and making space for the peace of Christ.

Lesson Goals: By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

1. Identify how Jesus redefines worry and provision in the Sermon on the Mount (Knowing).
2. Grow in trust that God is their provider, leading to deeper peace in the face of uncertainty. (Loving)
3. Commit to showing generosity and justice by letting go of worry and living in God's peace. (Serving)

Teaching Strategies

Introduction

Ask: "What's something you've been worried about lately?" Give participants time to reflect privately or write their answers on index cards.

Explain that Jesus doesn't dismiss worry but invites us to handle it differently. Read the **Key Verse** aloud and explain that today's session explores what it means to trust our heavenly Father during stressful times. Connect this to the season of Advent – a time of spiritual preparation and trust.

Bible Story

Read Matthew 6:24-34 together. Encourage participants to highlight repeated phrases (e.g., "Do not worry," "Look at the birds," "Seek first...").

Ask: What is Jesus saying about what we trust most? How does he contrast God with mammon? Why do you think he uses examples from nature?

Mini-Activity:

On chart paper, draw two columns: "Worry mindset" (focused on scarcity); "Kingdom mindset" (focused on trust).

Have participants brainstorm examples for each from their lives or the passage.

Life Application

Explain: "Faith is not passive; it involves resistance to fear and living in joyful trust. **Ask:** "How does it feel to release worry, even symbolically? What helps you trust God more in daily life?"

Alternative: Worry Drop - Provide each participant with a small pebble or stone. **Invite** them to silently name a current worry and drop the pebble into a water bowl as a symbolic release.

Discussion (optional):

1. How does it feel to release worry, even symbolically?
2. What helps you trust God more in daily life?
3. What does seeking God's kingdom look like in school, friendships, or family life?

Summary

We don't ignore problems, but we also don't face them alone. God is our provider, and that frees us to live with peace, not panic. Review the reflection questions and select 2-3 to discuss.

Reflection Questions:

1. What's the difference between being prepared and being worried?
2. How can trusting God's provision help you release anxiety about the future?
3. In what ways can letting go of worry help you live more freely and serve others?

Closing Devotions

Invite the participants to prepare for the **Closing Devotion**. Instruct them to open their hearts and minds; ask them to extend their hands with their palms up as a demonstration of opening. **Use** guided breathing as you read the prayer slowly.

Guided breathing: Instruct participants to breathe in through their nostrils for a count of 6, and exhale through their mouth for the same count of 6. Repeat 2-3 times.

Resources

- Bibles or printouts of the printed texts
Matthew 6:24-34 in various translations (NRSV, NLT, The Message)
- Chart paper or whiteboard
- Video clip
Advent Joy - <https://bibleproject.com/videos/chara-joy/> (4 min)
Don't Worry - <https://youtu.be/PG1LjFO99dA?si=5sOKAlonMH4JDcWV> (3 min)

- Advent - <http://www.iamame.org/worship-resources-2/> (clipart, AME resources)
Visual Advent Candle
- Supplies: Index cards, paper, pens, markers, digital device (optional)
Bowl with water and small pebbles for “Worry Drop” activity
- Music: instrumentals or quiet worship music (optional)

Lesson 3

December 21, 2025

Christ the Savior (Fourth Sunday of Advent)

Lesson Scripture: Luke 2:11, 30-32; 15:3-7; John 3:14-17; 10:9-11, 14-16, 27-28; Acts 3:1-18; Romans 5:1-11; Philippians 2:5-11; 2 Timothy 1:9-10

Focus Scripture: Luke 15:3-7; Romans 5:6-10

Key Verse: If while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more surely, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life. Romans 5:10

Vocabulary

- **Reconcile (REK-uhn-sahyl)** – To restore a relationship, make peace, or bring back together.
- **Shepherd (SHEP-erd)** – One who tends, protects, and leads sheep; also, a biblical image for a leader who lovingly guides and cares for people.
- **Lamb of God** – A title for Jesus that reflects his role as the ultimate sacrifice for sin.
- **Justify (JUHS-tuh-fahy)** – To be made right with God through faith and grace.
- **Lost** – Spiritually disconnected, unsure of identity or belonging; not forgotten by God.

Introduction

Greet each participant by name and welcome them into the fourth week of Advent, a time of expectation and preparation. Explain that the fourth Sunday of Advent is focused on love, as Christmas is close. The fourth Sunday is the last Sunday of Advent, we know Christ's birth is near, and

we are concluding our preparation and shifting to celebration. Emphasize, Christmas is the receipt of the greatest gift given to humanity, a promised savior. The reason we give gifts is as an expression of God's gift to us in the manifestation of the Son. The fourth Sunday focuses on Love, for God is love.

Ask students to reflect quietly for a moment: "Have you ever felt overlooked, disconnected, or lost?" Share that today's lesson reminds us of God's pursuit of each one of us – not with judgment, but with joy.

Explain that much like the shepherd in Jesus' story who left 99 sheep to search for one, God's love is personal. Through Christ, we are found, restored, and made whole. God's love makes us safe and secure.

Lesson Goals: By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

1. Compare the attributes of Jesus as "shepherd" with those of Jesus as "sacrificial lamb." (Knowing)
2. Value the extent Christ goes to rescue them. (Loving)
3. Bear witness to Christ's reconciling power at work in the world. (Serving)

Teaching Strategies

Introduction

Ask: "Have you ever been somewhere with people but still felt alone?"

Invite volunteers to share a brief story or moment when they felt unnoticed or left out. *If no one volunteers, as leader, share a moment you felt or a story you heard about someone else who felt unnoticed.* **Affirm** that God's love sees us, finds us, and brings us back into belonging. **Introduce the title:** Safe and Secure. Today's lesson is about how God searches for us with love, not punishment.

Bible Story

Invite participants to **read** Luke 15:3-7 aloud with you or invite participants to act out the parable of the lost sheep. **Ask:** "What does the story reveal about God's character?"

Then invite participants to **read** Romans 5:6-10. **Instruct** them to highlight the phrase, "While we were still sinners." On the chart paper, board, or digital device, create two columns:

- *What we were doing (lost, sinning, doubting)*

- *What God was doing (seeking, loving, saving)*

Discuss: “How do these passages challenge the idea that you have to be perfect for God to love you?”

Life Application

Share: The AME Church has always been a refuge for the lost, marginalized, and the excluded. **Ask:** “What are some systems or messages in our culture that make people feel left out?” Allow time for participants to consider the question; do not move forward quickly.

Activity: Instruct participants to use their participant guide or a sheet of paper to write one group or an individual person they feel society forgets and then write one action they can take to reflect God’s love toward them. Invite participants to place their sheep/cards in a box or basket labeled “God Sees Us” as a sign of prayer and commitment.

Summary

God commands us to be generous – not just with leftovers, but with our hearts. The Bible calls us to open our hands, especially when it’s inconvenient. Giving isn’t just charity; it’s a reflection of God’s love and a sign that we trust in God’s provision. Our faith comes alive when we serve others.

Review the reflection questions and select 2-3 to discuss.

Reflection Questions:

1. What keeps people from helping others, even when they know it’s the right thing?
2. Why do you think Jesus compared himself to both a shepherd and a lamb?
3. Who around you might need to be reminded that they are loved and not alone?
4. Who in your community might need generosity and how can you respond?

Closing Devotions

Invite participants to share one takeaway from the lesson. (*Pop-corn: invite individuals to share randomly Round-Robin: go around the class space with each person providing a response; To-My-Neighbor: invite the first participant and have them invite the next person to respond; ex:*

Thomas, you first, then you select the next person to answer.) Thank the participants for sharing. **Pray** the closing prayer.

Resources:

- Bibles or printouts of the printed texts
- Chart paper or whiteboard
- Video clip
Advent Love - <https://bibleproject.com/videos/agape-love/> (5 min)
The Parable of the Lost Sheep - https://youtu.be/AnpUdDPGU_A?si=JmPCeo1Scze6qbom (8 min)
The Good Shepherd - https://youtube.com/shorts/tOGTk_S1FRM?si=oDVap63jB-jPR65R
- Advent - <http://www.iamame.org/worship-resources-2/> (clipart, AME resources)
Bible Project
- Supplies: Paper, pens, markers, digital device (optional)
Paper sheep cutouts or “Lost and Found” reflection cards
- Music: instrumentals or quiet worship music (optional)

The Teacher's Guide

Junior Lessons

Winter Quarter: December 2025 – February 2026

Prepared by Rev. Monica C. Jones, Ph.D.

Lesson 1

December 7, 2025

Led by God's Word

Lesson Scripture: Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 1:8-9; 2 Kings 22:8-20; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Psalm 19:7-14; Luke 24:25-32; Acts 17:10-12; 2 Timothy 3:14-17

Focus Scripture: Psalm 19:7-11; 2 Timothy 3:14-15

Key Verse: From childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 2 Timothy 3:15

Word Power!!!

- **Sacred** – Anything relating to our faith, religion, or our church experiences, holy.
- **Salvation** – God's way of giving us eternal life, being safe and right with God through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross.

Lesson Goals: By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

1. Grasp the knowledge of using the Holy Bible to direct and guide their lives.
2. See the vocabulary in the lesson to put their faith and service into action.
3. Understand what salvation means and begin to visualize what it means for them.
4. Understand Advent and recognize its relationship to Christian living.
Although it may not occur in every lesson, the general intent would be for students to have knowledge of terms and then put acquired knowledge into action by demonstrating love and finally service. These concepts will be woven into the activities each week.

Teaching Strategies

Emphasis

1. Discuss salvation while looking at examples from **Lesson Scripture**

regarding living a saved life.

2. Explain what Advent means, and how the birth of Jesus Christ relates to the lesson.
3. Guide the activity discussed in Ms. Browne's class helping each student complete a choice of words to share with others; give biblical reminders of how they are noted in the text.

Questions

1. What do you think salvation means?
2. What can you do during Advent to help another person? What word did you choose from your list?
3. Write *yes* or *no* to the following question (upon completion, submit it to the teacher): Have you prayed the prayer of salvation? (Note: Be prepared to act on any opportunity to pray the *Prayer of Salvation*).

Resources: For each class, provide Bibles or Bible apps, with the goal of fostering an interest in learning scripture; when possible, a device or access to a device for online use, writing paper/notebooks, colored pencils, markers, or crayons where necessary

The video, Books of the Bible Rap



Lesson 2

December 14, 2025

The Lord Cares for All

Lesson Scripture: Exodus 34:4-7; Psalm 103:1-5, 10-14; Isaiah 40:27-31; Matthew 6:24-34; John 3:3-6; 4:20-24; 8:40-47; Romans 2:2-11; 8:14-17; 1 John 4:7-16

Focus Scripture: Matthew 6:24-34

Key Verse: "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear." Matthew 6:25

Word Power!!!

- **Care** – Being concerned for something or someone; providing support

for an individual in need.

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand the need to share with others as well as the importance of separating from things they may want for the benefit of someone else.
2. Think of a few ways to help people in need and identify something they can personally do.
3. See God as their provider and one who loves them unconditionally.

Teaching Strategies

Emphasis

1. Spend enough time to ensure that all learners have identified ways they will share with and help others in their community.
2. Talk about God's love and encourage students to give examples of how God loves them.

Questions

1. What do you think is an effective way to help another person, even if you do not have much to share?
2. Do you believe God loves you? If so, what would be an example?
3. What do you believe Jesus meant when he said do not worry what you will wear or eat tomorrow?

Resources: Index cards, preferably colored; if it is available, play "The Jesus in Me Loves the Jesus in You" during the praise time



Lesson 3

December 21, 2025

Emmanuel Means, "God Is With Us"

Lesson Scripture: Luke 2:11, 30-32; 15:3-7; John 3:14-17; 10:9-11, 14-16, 27-28; Acts 3:1-18; Romans 5:1-11; Philippians 2:5-11; 2 Timothy 1:9-10

Focus Scripture: Luke 2:11; 15:3-7; Romans 5:6-8

Key Verse: "To you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord." Luke 2:11

Word Power!!!

- **Sheep** – Fragile and innocent animals cared for by a shepherd. In the Bible, sheep are used to explain how we should follow our shepherd, who is Jesus.
- **Emmanuel (ee-man'-u-ell)** – A word in the Old Testament of the Bible; it relates to how God protects us; it means “God is with us.”

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand the definition of sheep in the biblical context.
2. Explain what “Emmanuel” means.
3. Have a reasonable concept of discipleship.
4. See gift-giving sacrificially to honor God.

Teaching Strategies

Emphasis

1. Concentrate on how “God Is With Us” connects with the birth of Jesus Christ.
2. Draw a parallel between the Bible story and shepherds – observe how they protected their sheep.
3. Review how Vicki’s story shows how we are no longer lost when we give our lives to Jesus Christ.

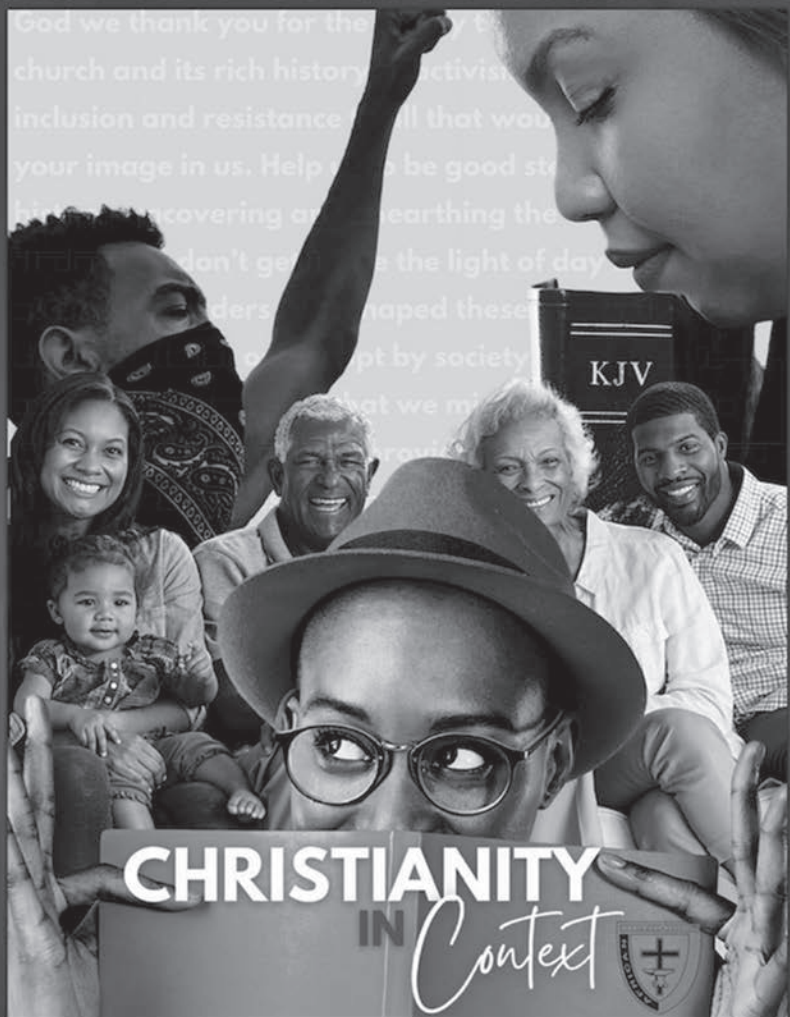
Questions

1. Have you lost something that you liked? How did it make you feel?
2. Now that you have heard this lesson, what is at least one way you can feel better when you have lost something?
3. What does being lost mean when it comes to our salvation? How are we found?
4. We are going to listen to a song called “Amazing Grace.” Before listening, what do you think the expression *amazing grace* means?

Resources: In addition to art supplies for the cards, include a recording of “Amazing Grace” (AMECH #226); a recording of “Amazing Grace” with fifty countries during COVID-19 pandemic



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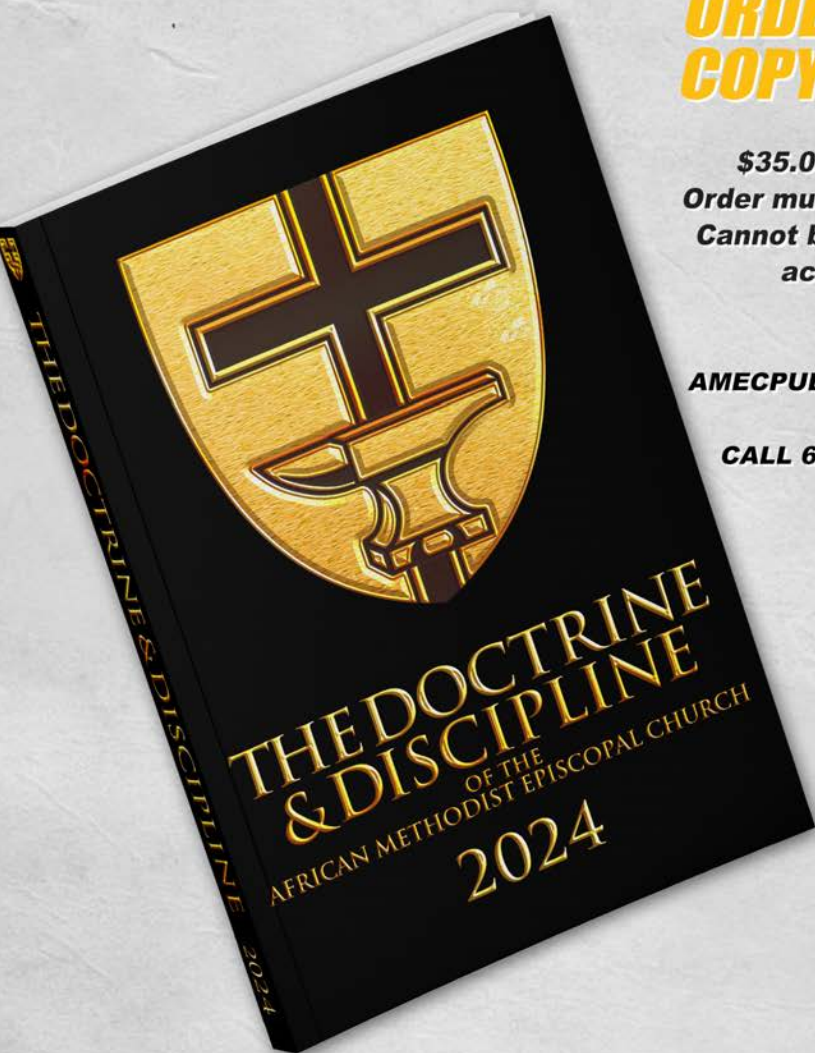
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