

2016 Vacation Bible School Preview

By Debbie Kolacki of

PRC– Practical Resources for Churches

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Preparation

Start early! - Although you can put together a VBS in less time, it's best to start at least six months ahead of time.

Recruit volunteers - You'll need to know that you have enough adults for a safe adult to child ratio and that you'll have leaders and assistants for all the different activity areas. If you don't have enough adults, you may have to limit the number of children in your VBS or not offer some activities.

Assess your resources - This includes knowing your budget as well as figuring out what areas inside or outside of your church you can utilize, what supplies you already have, etc.

Set the date - Try to pick the best date and time for your staff and children. Ask your volunteers when they're available and check to see what kinds of things are going on in your community: other VBS programs, day camps, etc. VBS is not limited to five mornings from 9 to noon, so consider having an evening or weekend VBS or even having it once a week over several weeks.

Choose and order curriculum - You'll want to do this as soon as possible, so you can get materials out to your leaders and start publicizing your program. Don't wait too long to order add-ons, such as student pages and giveaways, as the publishers often run out of these items before summer even begins.

Publicize and register - Try to get your families to register as soon as possible so you have an idea of how many children you'll have. If you charge for VBS you can offer an early bird discount to encourage people to register ahead of time.

Train staff and youth helpers - It's important to have one or more training sessions for your staff so they know what's expected of them; it will also get them excited about VBS as they learn about the theme and activities. Don't forget to offer training for your youth assistants as well. Make sure you follow your church's safe church or safe sanctuaries program.

Pray - Pray for a successful VBS and ask others in your church and community to pray as well.

Follow-up

Most people are exhausted when VBS is over, but follow-up is very important. Plan your follow-up now to make sure you don't miss the opportunity to connect with new families and to get feedback on your program.

Connect with families - If you have VBS families who aren't a part of your church, make sure you invite them to attend Sunday school, services, and other activities that you offer. Try to get your pastor or outreach team involved in this as well. Have a brochure available to give them with information about your church and mail out a letter inviting them to services and Sunday school.

Evaluations - These are important and should be done when VBS is still fresh in people's minds. Ask volunteers as well as families for feedback on how your program went. You may find out some things you didn't know and can make improvements for next year.

Thank - Don't forget to thank your volunteers, not just at your VBS closing ceremony, but in a worship service as well. Celebrate the many hours that your staff gave to make your VBS a success so they know they are appreciated! Dedicating your staff in a worship service before VBS begins is another good thing to do.

Continue the adventure - Consider using your VBS theme in Sunday school, leaving up decorations and playing the VBS music. Some companies even sell curriculum to do this. You could also plan a morning reunion a few weeks after VBS is over.

Think about next year! - It's not too soon to start thinking about next year! Let your volunteers and families know that you're looking forward to seeing them all at your next VBS and use whatever you've learned to make your program even better in the future!

Choosing curriculum

Cost - What sort of budget do you have? Will you be charging for VBS? Will you be able to get people to donate food and supplies or will you need to purchase them? There are free VBS curriculums available but most of the starter kits cost anywhere from \$60 to \$200. Will you be buying a lot of extras, such as student pages, decorations, craft kits, etc.? Consider having a joint VBS with one or more churches or find a church that's doing their VBS at a different time than yours and you can share the cost of curriculum, decorations, etc.

Theology - Most VBS curriculum can be adapted to coincide with your church or denomination's theology, but sometimes this can be difficult. For instance, if the words to some of the songs express a viewpoint that differs from your church's theology, you'll have to eliminate those songs. Some curriculums include suggestions on how to lead a child to make a commitment to Christ. If that is something that isn't done in your church, you'll have to clarify that for your teachers.

Students - The curriculum you select will also be based on what sort of students you expect to come to your VBS. Some curriculums are better if you have a lot of younger children and some work better with older kids. You might also want to consider your setting, such as whether it's rural or urban.

Theme - It's important to have a theme that you and your staff are excited about and that you think your children will enjoy. Some themes are also easier to decorate for than others. If you plan to come up with your own craft ideas, some themes may work better for this than others.

Music and video - When selecting a curriculum the music is important because, unless you have talented musicians who can come up with their own music, the music is something that is difficult to change. Again, some curriculums have music that is more appealing to younger children and some have music that is better for older children. If you don't have musicians then look for a curriculum that includes a music DVD.

Ease of use - This is a consideration, although most of the kits are pretty user-friendly.

Marketing - Publicity is important, so it's helpful if the curriculum you select offers tools that make this job easier for you.

Where to purchase

Once you've decided on a curriculum, you have a number of choices as to where you can purchase your kit and other supplies. If you anticipate returning any material, check the return policy of the companies, as they vary in what they'll accept for return and deadlines for returning material.

Directly from publisher - This may not give you the best price. However, sometimes publishers will offer freebies or free shipping along with your purchase. Since the publishers know their products, you may find that you'll get better answers to your questions when you order directly from them.

Third party - There are also many third party companies that sell VBS kits. Most of these offer VBS kits at discounted prices. Here's a list with links to some of them:

[Christian Book Distributors](#)

[Christian Stuff](#)

[Church Partner](#)

[Concordia Supply](#)

[Victory Church Products](#)

Concordia Supply offers a [catalog](#) online or by snail mail which has information about VBS in general as well as extensive information about the most popular kits.

Non-denominational publishers



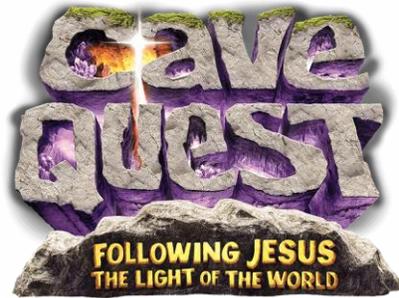
Group and Standard are popular nondenominational publishers. Gospel Light, which published VBS curriculum for many years, has filed for bankruptcy and is no longer publishing VBS curriculum. Gospel Light's website has a notice that their Sunday school curriculum and ministry resources were acquired by David C. Cook.



**No longer
being
published**

Group

Group Publishing is one of the most popular publishers for VBS materials. This year they are offering four VBS kits. Cave Quest is their five day contemporary curriculum. Egypt is their five day Bible time curriculum, and Pets Unleashed is their weekend curriculum. The theme for their Cross Culture VBS, which was introduced last year, is Expedition Norway. There is also a [Roman Catholic version](#) of Group's Cave Quest program.



Theme: Group's contemporary curriculum this year is called [Cave Quest: Following Jesus, the Light of the World](#). The website says: "Gear up for an over-the-top underground adventure! Ground kids in the rock-solid foundation of God's love, a love that takes us through life's dark times."

Bible stories: All five Bible stories are from the New Testament. The Bible points for each day are that Jesus gives us hope, courage, direction, love, and power. As Group has done in the past, the fourth day focuses on Jesus' death and resurrection.

Age level: Everyone is together for opening worship. Preschoolers have their own program while kids in Kindergarten through 6th grade rotate to stations. A separate program for youth called "Shine" is also available.

Music: There are 10 songs. Group's website lets you download the theme song for free and hear samples of the other nine songs. The songs are upbeat and include a number with the theme of light, including "This Little Light of Mine."

Centers: Multi-age groups of kids rotate to storytelling, science, games, food, and KidVid cinema centers. The KidVid DVDs feature real kids who "rely on God as they go through life."

Missions: The Operation Kid-to-Kid Missions project is in North America this year with an organization that provide basic home repairs to those in need.

Pricing: The Ultimate Starter Kit's list price is \$176.99. This year Group is offering a Digital Plus Ultimate Starter Kit for \$209.99 which has everything in the Ultimate Starter Kit plus access to a download center that has all the music, videos, and leader manuals in digital format.

Other resources: Group offers almost anything you can think of for your VBS program including training DVDs, giveaways that interact with free apps, T-shirts, hats, plenty of decorating resources, as well as online tools to promote, register, and organize VBS.



Each year Group Publishing offers a Bible time VBS called Holy Land Adventure, which is a good choice if you have an intergenerational VBS program.

Theme: This year's offering is [Egypt: Joseph's Journey from Prison to Palace](#). The website says "Join Joseph as he swats away scorpions in a dark prison cell...stroll through the golden splendor of Pharaoh's palace... experience exotic sights and smells in an Egyptian bazaar...be carried away by music wafting through enticing desert air."

Bible stories: The Bible stories tell about Joseph in the Old Testament from his imprisonment in prison until his family comes to settle in Egypt.

Age level: Preschool to adult; multi-age groups of Egyptian families stay together during the program.

Music: There are ten songs. You can download the theme song for free and preview the other nine songs on Group's website. The music is good but not as lively as the music for Cavern Quest.

Centers: The program begins and ends with celebrations. There are family times for small group sharing, and families rotate to Joseph in prison or the palace, to Pyramid Playground, and to the Marketplace to make crafts or sample treats at the Food Shop.

Missions: The Operation Kid-to-Kid Missions project is in North America this year with an organization that provide basic home repairs to those in need.

Pricing: Starter Kit list price is \$139.99.

Other resources: You can purchase Bible Memory Makers as a special take-home token for each day. There are also decorating resources as well as online tools to help publicize your program.





Group's Weekend VBS includes two 2-1/2 hour sessions and one Sunday celebration. Theme: This year the program is called [Pets Unleashed: Where Jesus Cares "Fur" You](#). The publicity on the website states that: "Kids are crazy for critters with whiskers, tails, feathers, or scales! That's why kids will think this VBS is the cat's meow. During the two short days at Pets Unleashed VBS, you'll introduce kids to Jesus, God's Son who lovingly cares for us." The Bible point for the program is that Jesus cares for us.

Bible stories: Day one focuses on Jesus' Sermon on the Mount and day two on Jesus' death and resurrection.

Age level: Preschool – grade 6. Kids are together in multi-age groups.

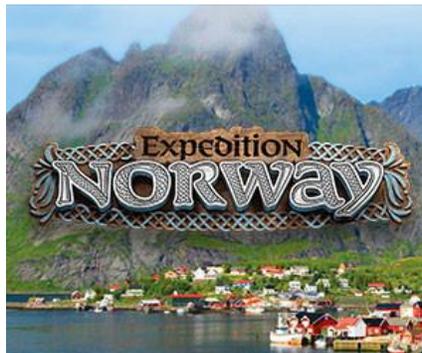
Music: The music is good; there are five songs. The theme song can be downloaded for free from Group's website and samples of the other four songs are available there as well.

Centers: Preschoolers join the rest of the kids for the opening and closing but have their own separate program. Centers include music, storytelling, and games. Kids also visit Projects-With-a-Purpose where they make special gifts for others in their church, community, or the world.

Missions: Projects-With-a-Purpose.

Pricing: Ultimate Starter Kit list price is \$68.99.

Other resources: Student resources include Jesus Cares for Us Wristbands. The website offers resources for decorating and publicizing your program.



Theme: Last year Group added a fourth option for VBS called Cross Culture. This year the focus is on Norway. Participants will experience the sights, sounds, smells, and tastes of this unique culture while discovering God's eternal love for the world. There is curriculum for four days in [Expedition Norway](#).

Bible stories: The first two days tell the story of Daniel from the Old Testament being taken to Babylon and then facing a den of lions. Day three has the story of Jesus' death and resurrection and day four tells the story of Jesus on the beach after the resurrection.

Age level: Preschool through 5th grade. Preschoolers attend the opening celebration and then have a separate program.

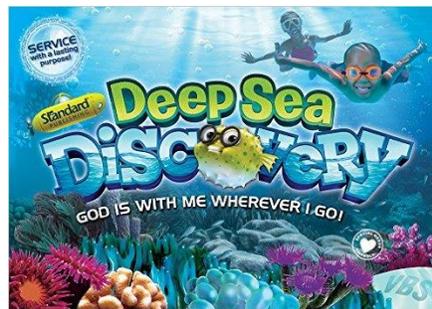
Music: There are eight songs including an upbeat version of "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee." The theme song is a free download. Samples of the other songs are on the website.

Centers: There are opening and closing celebrations with music as well as four stations: Bible Adventures, Experience Norway, games, and food. At the opening celebration kids will meet real kids from Norway on video. The closing celebration includes drama and science experiments.

Missions: The Operation Kid-to-Kid Missions project is in North America this year with an organization that provide basic home repairs to those in need.

Pricing: The Starter Kit sells for \$149.99.

Other resources: Bible Memory Makers are available as well as t-shirts and a FollowUp Foto Frame. There are decorating and publicity resources on Group's website.



Theme: Standard Publishing is another non-denominational company. Their VBS program this year is called [Deep Sea Discovery: God Is with Me Wherever I Go](#). The website states that: "At Deep Sea Discovery, kids dive into God's presence by delving deep into His Word to see how He has been with His people every step of the way. Every kid will sail away each day saying "God is with me – wherever I go! He KNOWS me, HEARS me, STRENGTHENS me, LOVES me, and SENDS me!"

Bible stories: The first three days focus on Old Testament stories and the last two on New Testament stories.

Age level: Preschool to 6th grade. There is a Teen Student Book with journal pages and service challenges and a downloadable Adult Bible Study Guide.

Music: The eight original songs are written and sung by Yancy, a contemporary Christian pop rock singer. The music is free to reproduce and you can listen to samples of the music as well as [music video clips](#) on Standard's website.

Centers: The opening focuses on worship, music, skits, and missions. The other centers are Bible Stories, Crafts & Science, Service Projects, and Snacks & Games. There is a Sensory Station, which is a specially designed space where kids with special sensory

needs can experience an oasis of calm in the busy world of VBS! There also is a separate preschool program.

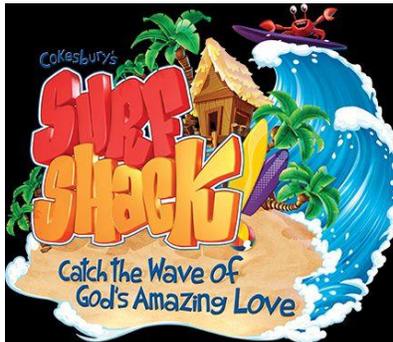
Missions: Partnering with Back2Back Ministries, the mission focus includes the true video story of story of Daniela, a young girl from Mexico who learned that God was with her during some really difficult times. At the Service & Missions site, kids will be encouraged to share the message of God's love through practical service projects.

Pricing: The Super Simple Starter Kit sells for \$179.99.

Other resources: There are plenty of additional items to purchase as well as a website builder and online registration manager. The creators of the curriculum have paid special attention to making the curriculum adaptable for children with special needs. There are options for including kids with special needs alongside typically developing kids or for a self-contained site for children with special needs. A Sensory Inventory Form helps leaders know each child's strengths and weaknesses and volunteers don't require special training.

Standard is also selling last year's VBS curriculum, [Bible Blast to the Past](#).

Denominational publishers



Cokesbury is the publisher for the United Methodist Church, although it has recently started selling resources from other denominational and nondenominational publishers.

Theme: The title of Cokesbury's program is [Surf Shack: Catch the Wave of God's Amazing Love](#). The focus is on God's awesomeness as kids learn how we're meant to experience an epic adventure each day.

Bible stories: There are two Old Testament stories and three New Testament stories. The Bible Points for the five days are God creates, helps, loves, calms, and sends.

Age level: Preschool – 6th grade. A Youth Leader study guide can be used for 5th-7th grade students or as an introduction to the program for youth helpers. A five session adult study sells for \$9.99.

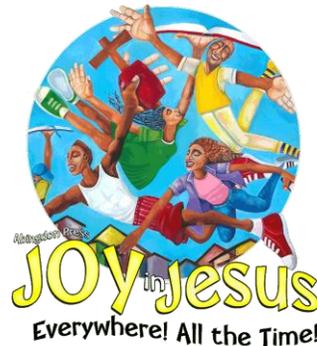
Music: There are 10 upbeat songs. There is a music video DVD and a student music CD is available for \$3.99. You can listen to music samples on the website.

Centers: There are storytelling, crafts, science, music, recreation, mission, snack, and reflection time centers.

Missions: There are suggestions for multiple 20-minute mission project ideas; projects before, during, and after VBS; and hands on mission ideas.

Pricing: The Super Starter Kit lists for \$159.99.

Other resources: There are decorating and promotional items for sale as well as t-shirts and craft kits. There are also online tools such as a custom church web site, planning calendar, and personalized e-cards for publicity.



Abingdon Press has a connection to the United Methodist Church. Each year they publish a VBS program which they call a Bible and Arts program for your community. It has a special appeal to African-Americans with mostly African-American children and adults pictured in the materials.

Theme: Abingdon's VBS for this year is called [Joy in Jesus: Everywhere! All the Time!](#) The website states that the program "will help all of God's children understand that God affirms all life and God's joy can be experienced in every circumstance. This program celebrates that healing and happiness...is found in the mighty works of God through Jesus Christ."

Bible stories: There are two Old Testament and three New Testament stories.

Age level: Preschool – adult.

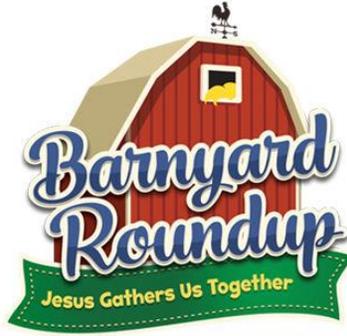
Music: The music is an important part of this program and will appeal to adults. There are 11 songs, most in hip-hop style. You can listen to music samples on the website. The worship DVD features an introductory video, music videos that reflect biblical and contemporary themes, and movement instructions and demonstrations.

Centers: There are music & movement, arts/crafts, and heritage/drama centers.

Missions: No specific mission project is specified.

Pricing: The Starter Kit lists for \$79.99.

Other resources: There are online tools such as a custom church website, planning calendar, and a personalized e-card for publicity. An Outreach/Follow Up resource for \$7.99 helps leaders plan children and youth activities for the rest of the year with an emphasis on flexible, hands-on, interactive projects. It includes project instructions, supply lists, community service and outreach ideas, and intergenerational fun.



Concordia Publishing House is the publisher for the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod.

Theme: Concordia's VBS this year has a farm theme and is called [Barnyard Roundup: Jesus Gathers Us Together](#). Kids are taught that "Jesus loves you always and forever no matter what!" Kids learn that Jesus cares, provides, leads, forgives, and is our Savior.

Bible stories: The five stories are from the New Testament and the theme verse is from the 23rd Psalm: "The Lord Is My Shepherd."

Age level: Preschool – elementary. There are separate resources for preschoolers and Bible studies for youth and adults.

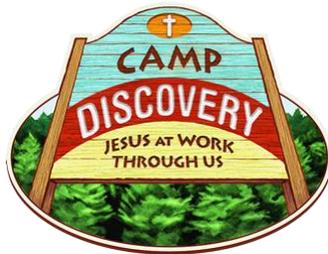
Music: There are eight theme songs, five hymns, five Bible memory songs, and six early childhood songs. Some of the songs have a country music feel to them. There is a pass-along CD/DVD for students with all the songs as well as eight music videos for \$4.99. You can listen to [music samples](#) on the website.

Centers: The centers include storytelling, Bible challenge, games, crafts, and snacks. The material and artwork is in a traditional style.

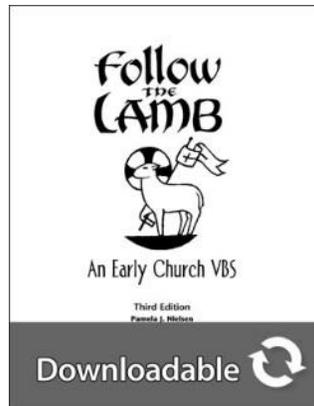
Missions: The mission project is Tin Roofs for Africa, a project for rural African communities that provides roofs for churches. There are five videos explaining the mission project to show during the opening celebration.

Pricing: The list price for the Starter Kit is \$159.99.

Other resources: A pastor's overview guide is available with information about the program and practical ways for the pastor to support the VBS ministry. There are free downloadable resources on the website such as artwork and decorating ideas. The Plan My VBS page of the website lets you create a VBS registration site and offers resources to promote your program and train volunteers.



Last year's VBS program, [Camp Discovery](#), is also available for purchase.



Concordia also offers [Follow the Lamb](#), a downloadable five-day VBS program which sells for \$99. It is for early childhood students through sixth graders. Older children are encouraged to participate as helpers.

The publisher states that:

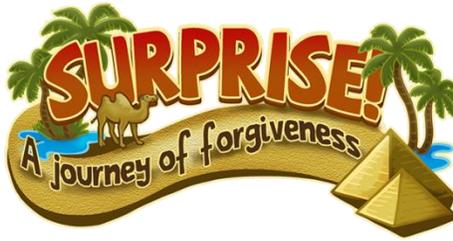
Students participate in hands-on activities, role-playing, and lessons as they walk through the major events of Christ's life as celebrated in the Christian Church Year: Christmas, Holy Week, the Resurrection, the Ascension and Pentecost.

The theme of the week is what life was like for the first Christians in the Early Church. Instructions are provided to help congregations recreate a 1st century atmosphere with costumes, props, and other suggestions. The crafts use easily obtained materials to help the children experience 1st century art forms: mosaics, clay objects, print making, etc. All instructions, teachers' guides, and materials lists are provided.

The music component of *Follow the Lamb* teaches children the major parts of the liturgy as it has been handed down to us from the earliest days of the Church. Hymns are suggested for each day's theme, some of which were written in the Early Church era.

A daily order of worship and a skit about a first century boy and his family as they prepare to be baptized and confirmed are provided. They are easy to do and are a great way to involve Junior and Senior High youth in the program.

The focus of *Follow the Lamb* is on Christ Jesus who guides and guards us through life, forgives us our sins, and provides His Church with the gifts it needs to follow Him, (proclaiming His Gospel, thanking and praising, serving and obeying Him to all eternity.)



Concordia Publishing House also offers a VBS program in both a Spanish and bilingual (Spanish/English) version.

Theme: The program is called [Surprise! A Journey of Forgiveness](#) and tells the story of Joseph in the Old Testament. The website states that “These five lessons reveal how Joseph is a precursor of Jesus, foreshadowing what our Savior would do for His children to reunite us with our heavenly Father and grant us forgiveness of sins and harmony in the great family of faith.”

Bible stories: The five stories are all about Joseph in the Old Testament.

Age level: Ages 3-14. There are also reproducible adult studies.

Music: There are eight songs available in Spanish and instrumental versions; they are not available in English. They are mostly in a traditional style. A multimedia CD includes songs, accompaniments, and narrations and PowerPoints in Spanish. You can listen to music samples on the website.

Centers: Besides the music and student lessons, there are some crafts.

Missions: There is no mission project suggested for this program.

Pricing: The Leader’s Pack for the bilingual program sells for \$59.99 and includes all the promotional, planning, and teaching materials you’ll need, plus sample student materials for each age level and lesson. Take-home student leaflets are sold separately.

Other resources: There are a few additional crafts to purchase.



Lifeway is the publisher for the Southern Baptist Convention.

Theme: Lifeway’s VBS program is called [Submerged: Finding Truth Below the Surface](#). The website states that the program “takes your kids on an adventure like no other, deep within the mysterious sea. As kids submerge themselves in God’s Word, they will discover that Jesus didn’t just see what’s on the outside of people. He looked deep down on the inside.” The VBS motto is “Jesus Sees. Jesus Knows. Jesus Saves.”

Bible stories: The five stories are from the New Testament.

Age level: Babies – adult.

Music: Besides the theme song “Submerged,” there are five songs for grades 1-6, ten songs for babies through age 2, and seven songs for ages 3 through Kindergarten.

Centers: Centers include music, recreation, crafts, snack, missions and Bible study.

Missions: There is a missions rotation leader guide with a DVD that includes video segments that follow missionaries throughout the week. Kids will participate in missions by collecting food for local food pantries.

Pricing: The Jump Start Kit lists for \$34.99 and the Preschool Starter Kit and Kids Starter Kit each list for \$99.99. There is also a Worship Rally Pack for \$41.99 with items that are not included in any of the starter kits. Most churches will need to purchase all four kits.

Other resources: A Special Friends Leader’s Guide is available for children, youth, and adults with special learning needs for \$11.99. There is a Spanish starter kit for \$69.99 as well as other resources in Spanish.



Lifeway is once again offering a way for churches to take VBS outside their church and into their communities. The [Backyard Kids Club](#) includes portable resources that can be used in a backyard or anywhere else you can gather a group of around 20 kids.

The Director’s Guide retails for \$14.99 and the kit retails for \$39.99. The kit includes ideas for organizing your Backyard Kids Club, music, student materials, craft ideas, a DVD, and more. The Backyard Kids Club uses the same Bible content, music, and themes as the Submerged VBS program, so all the accessories for that program can be used with this one as well.



Lifeway also offers [Zip for Kids](#) which can be used for a simple VBS for preschoolers through grade six.



Mennomedia, the publisher of the Mennonite Church USA, publishes this kit and states that their VBS curriculum is popular not just with Mennonite churches, but also with Episcopal, Brethren, Baptist, and United Church of Christ congregations.

Theme: Mennomedia's VBS curriculum is called [Surprise! Stories of Discovering Jesus](#). The publicity for the program mentions that people were surprised by Jesus and asks: "Are you ready to be surprised by Jesus? Are you ready to ask questions and discover more about him? Then come along on the journey, open your eyes, and see what you will find!"

Bible stories: All five stories are from the New Testament.

Age level: Preschool to grade 5. There is a free download on the website to adapt the program for grades 6-8.

Music: As of this date (2/4/16) information about the music had not yet been posted on the website.

Centers: Children in grades K-5 will see Bible stories come to life in the dramas during worship time, and will reflect on them during three response times: Bible Response, Active Response, and Creative Response. Children ages 4-5 will have storytelling, crafts, games, and other activity centers.

Missions: I couldn't find any reference to a mission project on the website.

Pricing: The Starter Kit lists for \$164.99.

Other resources: There are free downloadable leader resources on the website such as leader appreciation certificates and an overview. All the items in the Starter Kit are available separately so you can customize your program to fit your needs. There aren't many extra resources such as giveaways and decorating supplies to purchase.



The Regular Baptist Press is a publisher for some Baptist churches.

Theme: This VBS program is titled [Cow-A-Bunga Farm: Growin' with Our Faithful God](#). The website states that "Students will experience life on the farm – complete with animals, tractors, and growing crops. As they learn about God's faithfulness as revealed in the life of Joseph, they'll be encouraged to grow in godliness and to trust in God's

plan.” The publisher advertises their program as the “evangelistic VBS” with a strong emphasis on the salvation message.

Bible stories: The stories are all from the Old Testament and tell the story of Joseph.

Age level: Preschool – elementary.

Music: The music is available in two versions: piano with vocals or instrumental with vocals. There are nine songs. Music samples are available on the website.

Centers: The centers include games, snacks, crafts, music, and missions.

Missions: The mission project is Operation Books which gives books to international Christian schools.

Pricing: The Intro Kit is available in either a KJV or NKJV translation and sells for \$99.99.

Other resources: There are numerous extras available such as promotional resources and gifts for students such as backpacks, balloons, and iron-on transfers.

Leader Resources

Leader Resources sells downloads of [Episcopal VBS programs](#). There are various themes; a number of them are based on popular children’s books. The prices range from around \$50 to \$75.

- A Second Pilgrimage explores the lives of biblical and historical saints,
- Aslan Is on the Move! is based on *The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe*.
- Dare to Be Different! is based on *A Wrinkle in Time*.
- The Good Shepherd includes outdoor activities for learning about the Good Shepherd.
- The Moses Chronicle is based on the life of Moses.
- The Peaceable Kingdom uses Dr. Seuss and other children’s book characters to teach children the principles of anti-bullying.
- Pilgrimage: Seeking the Kingdom of God has a medieval pilgrimage theme.
- Praying All the Time uses different books to teach about prayer.
- Wild Willy & The Prodigal Son is based on the book *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*.
- Wizards & Wonders is based on the Harry Potter books.



Other kits available

There are also numerous other VBS options with various themes and theological viewpoints. The quality of the kits varies as well. You can click on the links to find out more.

The publicity for Jeff Slaughter's [2016 VBS Tree House](#) states: "Join Jeff Slaughter at the VBS TreeHouse for an action-packed adventure through the Bible! The scriptures and Bible stories teach us about the promises of God starting with our theme verse, Joshua 23:14. ("Now I am about to go the way of all the earth. You know with all your heart and soul that not one of all the good promises the LORD your God gave you has failed. Every promise has been fulfilled; not one has failed.") We'll continue the adventure through skits, craftivities, games, and fun snacks that reinforce the themes for each day." Kits from previous years are also available.

[Tour God's Word with the Rizers](#) uses Old and New Testament verses set to music from the Rizers, a pop-rock kids band. Rizers is short for "memorizers" so this program will help kids commit scripture passages to memory.

[Mega Sports Camp Epic Moments](#) offers the option of having a sports camp for your VBS.

[Water All Around the World](#) is a mission-focused VBS curriculum from the Presbyterian Church's Living Waters of the World. The cost of \$47 includes printed materials, a music CD, and a flash drive containing full-color reproducibles and a digital manual.

Urban Ministries is offering a VBS for African American churches this year called [I've Got Talent](#).

The publisher of the What's in the Bible video series has a [VBS program](#). The kit sells for \$169.99 and has everything you need for 2 versions of VBS - a traditional VBS and a family VBS.

[Gotta Move: Keepin' in Step with the Spirit](#) features the Go Fish Guys, a contemporary Christian musical group.

[Olympian](#) is the 2016 VBS of VBS Reachout Adventures which is connected with the Presbyterian Church of America, not to be confused with the Presbyterian Church (USA).

[The Conquerors](#) comes from Bogard Press, a Baptist publisher.

[Heroes of History: My Part in History](#) is based on novels by Jenny Cote.

Answers in Genesis is a creationist publisher. Their VBS this year is called [Ocean Commotion: Diving into Noah's Flood](#).

[B.A.S.I.C. Elements](#) is a science based VBS program. This year there is an additional VBS program called [Elements of Trust](#).

[Faithbook: The B-I-B-L-E](#) is the VBS program of R.H. Boyd, a Baptist publisher.

Pioneer's Club 2016 VBS program is called [One Way Café](#).

[Proof Pirates](#) comes from New Growth Press.

Zondervan is selling a VBS kit called [Willie's Redneck Rodeo](#) based on the families in the TV show Duck Dynasty.

Free downloadable programs

[Several free downloads](#) are available from the UCC (United Church of Christ) and Christian Church: Disciples of Christ on the KidsToKids website. Kids to Kids is a children's mission program that gives children in North America opportunities to learn about and serve children from other parts of the world. The VBS programs available are:

- Journey to Columbia
- Journey to Congo
- Journey to India
- Bethany Village Live!
- God's Love Is Everywhere, where children visit a different mission site for each of five days.

The Episcopal Church also offers free downloads that can be used for VBS.

The [Abundant Life Garden Project](#) is an interactive, scripture-based children's curriculum for those who seek to share the ministry of the Episcopal Church's Relief & Development program. It's for elementary age children and explores five areas: water, seeds, soil, animals, and harvest.

A children's program on malaria which can be used as a VBS curriculum [is Rita Mosquito](#).

You can also find other free VBS programs online, such as [The Armor of God](#) and [BigHeart Farms](#) based on the fruit of the spirit.

Other possibilities?

You can also create your own VBS using various resources. Perhaps you'd like to offer a drama camp or arts VBS or have a particular topic in mind. PRC - Practical Resources for Churches helps churches put together programs and loans out resources for them.

We're also available to assist you in coming up with ideas for substitute crafts, games, and other activities for your VBS program.

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