

“It works. It’s fun. It’s a simple premise with a profound end result... we all learn to love the Bible even more, and we have a good time together.”

The Good Book Club

Adam is in the fourth grade. He and his parents are in church every Sunday. In the summer they come to the Good Book Club. We offer a continental breakfast and Adam eats a lot – sausage biscuit, fresh fruit, bagel, maybe more. He slumps in his chair, eats and plays mobile games. But don’t underestimate Adam or think he isn’t participating – or worse yet – doesn’t know his Bible stories.

“So, this week we read about Jacob. Who is Jacob?” asks the leader of the Good Book Club.

Adam sits up in his chair and answers. He doesn’t just say who Jacob is, he keeps going... that Jacob is Isaac’s son, and that he married Rebecca.

“Why did he trick his brother, and how did the brother react?”

Adam knows.

“Was God involved in this trickery, do you think?”

Adam has an opinion. So does sixth grader Steven whose Bible looks like a comic book, and even four year old Lisa who is coloring. It’s often hard for adults to get a chance to answer the questions!

Summer Sunday School for all Ages

The Good Book Club is summer Christian Formation for all ages at [Grace & Holy Trinity Church](#). We’re an urban church in Richmond, VA, where many of our parishioners are gone on summer weekends. With reduced numbers, and wanting to encourage intergenerational Bible study, we don’t offer traditional age-graded Sunday School. Instead we do the intergenerational Good Book Club. It meets at 9:00 a.m. between our two services, and lasts for 45 minutes. With continental breakfast, including Starbucks coffee (very important!), we gather around the table to talk, study, eat and be together.

Topics and Curriculum

We offer a Nursery for infants and toddlers, and for older children we put out coloring sheets that correspond to the stories we're studying. We get out maps and study internet sites. Sometimes our music director leads us in studying and singing hymns that correspond to particular Bible stories. There is a syllabus that outlines the summer reading as well as a weekly study sheet. These are handed out a week ahead of time, and posted on our website, and everyone is asked to read and study the stories prior to coming on Sunday morning.

The Good Book Club idea was created by our staff four years ago, and was designed and written by the Rev. Michael Cadaret. The purpose is simple: encourage people to read and study the Bible in an intergenerational context. To date, Michael has developed three years of curriculum. Year One is the Great Stories including Creation, Noah, Moses, David, Jesus' birth and baptism and parables. Year Two is reading portions on course: the Abrahamic cycle through Joseph; the Gospel of Mark; and portions of Acts including Paul's travels. Year Three begins with Old Testament heroes (and goats): Joshua, Judges, and David (including portions from the Psalms); different portraits of Jesus from each of the four Gospels, and Paul comparing accounts of his life (from Acts) with portions of his letters.

A Community of Learning

It works. It's fun. It's a simple intergenerational premise with a profound end result. We meet new people, adults learn that children often know more than we do, children learn that adults will listen to them, we all learn to love the Bible even more, and we have a good time together. If you have questions about the Good Book Club and the curriculum please contact the Rev. Michael Cadaret at Michael@ghtc.org.

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