

# Leaders Guide - Lesson Planning for Faith Development & Confirmation Classes

## Introduction

The United Methodist Church supports full inclusion for all, including people with intellectual, developmental and physical disabilities. This series engages and prepares teens and adults of all abilities to join in worship, faith development, social and service activities. Lessons have options for different learning styles. They include videos, hands-on activities and text at a 4<sup>th</sup> grade reading level. United Methodist Hymnal songs and multimedia help pre teach experiences that are similar to during church services.

Lessons are numbered, but use them in an order that fits your needs. For instance, if learners are in a class with same age peers who do not have disabilities, lessons can supplement regular curriculum. If learners with IDD have their own class, invite family and care givers to the first session. Share how the class will prepare learners to participate at church. Answer questions and discover what motivates each student to learn (and what to avoid). Assess learners' ability to read or be part of the class in different ways.

## Classroom Time

Gather materials (see Overview sheet). Ask a designated tech person to check videos and links before each session. Adapt lessons to fit the likes, abilities and disabilities of your learners (i.e., video may be at beginning of class or before the activity). Write the theme of the day in large letters on a board to help everyone stay on track. Help non or emerging readers by reading with them. Give all who want a chance to read, or to pass out papers, etc. It is ok that some learners prefer to do parallel activities, next to but not in the group. It is ok to establish boundaries like no leaving the room without permission and to take turns.

**Welcome** Social time, eating and sharing for 10 -15 minutes. Ask about food allergies before food is shared.

## Explore

Explore the lesson theme-watch a short video, and/or sing a hymn from **THE UNITED METHODIST HYMNAL** or **FAITH WE SING**. If learners know sign language, ask if they will sign song parts for others to learn. If you use multi-media, remember *some people exhibit sensory overload*. Alternate: watch the video before "Activities."

## Bible

The Bible is the foundation of United Methodism and this series. Lessons reference the New Revised Standard Version, with slight edits to make it readable. When a student or leader reads the Scripture, keep in mind that learners may not have a sense of time (historical, past and modern day). They *may see literal but not figurative or implied meanings of words*. Please promote reverence for God's Word.

## Respond –teaching moments

Use the Respond time to help learners discover what the Bible or spiritual principles mean in their everyday life. Adapt questions so they fit the everyday life of the learners (school, work, day programs, roommates, siblings, sports, relationships, etc). During Respond, give examples of when you faced "a hard time" or your best times to pray, to get the conversation started. All responses are good - they help us make faith choices. Give learners the choice to participate or "pass." Allow topic freedom within boundaries. It is ok to wander to student interest, but if they get way off subject, say, "Let's put that on the list for another time." Provide your witness, role models and real examples for learners, including service in church and community.

**Prayer** End the worship and teaching part of lessons with prayer. If possible ask one of the learners to lead it.

## Activities

Bridge activities by repeating the theme and saying how each activity relates to it. Describe activities before you begin. Most learners enjoy the action activities but some prefer worksheets. Adapt materials for learners who avoid specific textures, colors or sounds or have physical disabilities. Give learners something to think about, a Sign Language action, or service project until next time. This helps them share their gifts with your community.

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