Confirmation and Bible Curriculum

Confirmation Curriculum

Creative Confirmation, offered by Augsburg Fortress, is a series consisting of nine leader resources and more than 300 lessons and activities that teach traditional content in an active, experiential ways. With each activity designed to last about 20 minutes, teachers customize each class session by combining activities from several of the resources. Students use the Bible, Luther's Small Catechism, their hands, and their imaginations. To order visit www.augsburgfortress.org or call (800) 328-4648.

Building on the Rock is a curriculum from Bethesda Lutheran Communities that offers a structure to support the First Communion process and the rite of Confirmation for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. To order call (877) 878-6650 or visit www.bethesdalutherancommnities.org.

Charting the Course includes 62 visual aids (blackline masters) and teaching helps for confirmation instruction. This resource is available through Concordia Publishing House, www.cph.org or (800) 325-3040.

The Divine Drama from Crossways International consists of two parts. Part 1, "The Biblical Narrative", leads people through the biblical narrative and themes from creation to Christ. Part 2, "Our Narrative", studies basic Christian doctrines such as: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, sing and grace, eschatology, worship, the church, prayer, stewardship, etc. This resource can be used as a two-track course for confirmation students and their parents. All lessons use illustrative symbols to teach each lesson. This is a great series for older students and adults who are non-readers. Check www.crossways.org for more resources and information on workshops. Video courses of many of their titles are also available. Crossways International may also be contacted at (800) 257-7308.

Sacramental Preparation booklets and videos are available through the Network of Inclusive Catholic Educators (NICE), as part of the University of Dayton Institute for Pastoral Initiatives. These resources give teachers strategies to teach students with mental disabilities in the regular religious education classroom or in another stetting. The videos provide in-service training for teachers on the topics of religious education and theology. To order, visit http://ipi.udayton.edu/nice.htm or call (888) 532-3389.

Listen & Learn: A Confirmation Course consists of 16 tapes covering the commandments, creed, Sacraments, confession, prayer and more, lead by various instructors. Each tape includes a musical selection to fit the theme of the lesson.
Note: Lutheran Tape Ministries also offers a wide variety of other Christian material on tape, including the Old and New Testament. Tapes are sent without charge. Freewill donations support this ministry.
Contact Lutheran Tape Ministries at (800) 937-2591 for more information.

Northwestern Publishing offers the following confirmation resources:

- *The Simplified Catechism* (revised 1999) is a simplified version of Luther's Small Catechism, designed to help pastors, teachers, and parents teach God's Word to those with low vocabulary levels, mental impairments, or severe learning disabilities. It prepares students for communicant membership. Includes sessions based on five chief parts of Luther's Small Catechism. Reading level is approximately 2nd-3rd grade.
- *The Simplified Catechism Teacher's Guide* (revised 2000) is a starting point for people who lack experience in teaching, or as a reference for those who may already be using successful strategies. Includes black and white illustrations that support materials and demonstrate student projects.
- *Simplified Catechism Bible Stories* (revised 2000) is for use in the classroom or at home. Each Bible story relates to a lesson in *The Simplified Catechism* and every easy-to-read story includes a full-page color picture. Memory passages are listed after each story to support the lesson.
- Note: This series has recently been revised and includes improved illustrations for teachers and an

expanded teacher's guide.
To order visit www.nph.net or call (800) 662-6022.

New International Readers Version Bible is offered by Zondervan in several lower reading level versions. They offer kids' study Bibles as well as gift Bibles. Check their catalog or Web site, www.ZondervanChurchSource.com for a full listing.

Bible Curriculum

New Invitation Bridges: A Curriculum for Persons with Disabilities, is a quarterly program of study based on Bible stories. Designed for teachers and leaders who work with persons of all ages who have different or multiple disabilities, this curriculum offers a wealth of reproducible activities. Available through Abingdon Press, (800) 251-3320.

The following resources are offered by Bethesda Lutheran Communities:

- *Berea Project*, a set of lessons based on the three-year liturgical cycle followed by most LCMS churches. It features new lessons as well as others compiled from earlier issues of *Breakthrough* magazine. It provides teachers with a unique opportunity to reinforce the message heard in worship services each week.
- *Concept Cards* is a set of 25 simple, picture cards to represent different concepts such as love, Baptism, forgiveness, prayer, angels, etc. These cards are available as a part of the *Building on the Rock* confirmation curriculum.
- *Exploring Faith and Life* (2004), is a curriculum designed to enhance the spiritual growth of adult Christians with developmental disabilities through music, discussion, Scripture readings, and activities that encourage the inclusion of people with developmental disabilities in the life of the church and community. The curriculum package includes a teacher's guide with an introductory chapter with teaching tips and suggestions, 24 Bible study lesson plans, visual aids, sheet music for 15 music songs and a CD featuring the songs, and student leaflets to accompany each of the 24 lessons. Highly recommended for adults with developmental disabilities.

Bethesda Lutheran Communities offers other resources related to religious education through the Bethesda Institute: *Opening the Door to Learning*, *Feeling Comfortable with People who Have Disabilities*, *First Conversation*, *Breakthrough*, and *Building a Disability Ministry: a Manual for Congregations*.
To order or for more information visit www.bethesdalutherancommunities.org or call (800) 369-4636, Ext. 4448.

Abiding In Faith: A Resource for Teachers of Adults with Moderate Mental Retardation (1994), was developed by the National Council of Churches' Committee on Disabilities. This manual helps teachers understand not just what to teach, but how to teach it. It contains eight resource units with session plans. In ways they can understand, students learn to deal with such real-life issues as handling disappointment, making decisions, sharing with others, and taking care of the environment in ways that express their faith.
To order or for more information, contact Christian Board of Publication at (800) 366-3383, or www.cbp21.com.

The following resources are available through Concordia Publishing House:

- *Arch Books* is popular children's Bible story series. Select titles are available on audio or video.
- *Hear Me Read Series* (1992) are Bible-based storybooks with controlled vocabulary. Each book shares a complete Bible story using a list of 25 (or fewer) vocabulary words. Available in Level 1 and Level 2. These books are an excellent supplement to any Bible study curriculum for younger children. They are also great for first and second grade students with learning disabilities.
- *Phonetic Bible Stories* (1999) is a series using the phonics reading method and religious themes to create fun books that teach Bible stories and reinforce reading skills. There are books in the series, each is 18-pages.

For more resource information or to order, visit the Concordia Publishing House Web site at www.cph.org or call (800) 325-3040.

Learning Styles (1995) by Marlene LeFever, introduces the four ways people learn, how to identify them, and explores

these styles in different Christian learning environments such as in the classroom, during worship, and at home. It includes effective activities and methods that can be used with learners of all ages from elementary through adult. It is a "must-have" resource for all church and school libraries. Consider also the companion book to this title, *Creative Teaching Methods* by Marlene LeFever, which provides more teaching ideas. These are available as a set from Cook Communications Ministries at www.cookministries.com or (800) 323-7543.

The Divine Drama consists of two parts. Part 1 "The Biblical Narrative", leads people through the biblical narrative and themes from creation to Christ. Part 2, "Our Narrative," studies basic, Christian doctrines such as: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, sing and grace, eschatology, worship, the church, prayer, stewardship, etc. All lessons use illustrative symbols. It can be used as a two-track course for confirmation students and their parents, and is a great series for older students and adults who are non-readers. *The Divine Drama* is available through Crossways International at www.crossways.org or (800) 257-7308.
Check the Web site for more resources and information on workshops. Video courses of many of their titles are also available.

The following titles are available from Friendship Ministries:

- Bible studies (youth and adult) provide religious instruction for people with mental impairments, to prepare them for meaningful participation in church life. Curriculum is divided into a three-year series as follows: year 1, "God, Our Father"; year 2, "Jesus, Our Savior"; year 3, "Holy Spirit, Our Helper" (30 lessons per year). Components include: group leader kit, group leader guide, teacher manual, and student resources. Instructional materials include videos, posters, flannelgraph materials, overhead transparencies, and song CDs. This series was recently revised into Old Testament and New Testament components, with new artwork and additional lessons. Both the original and newly revised series are available
- *Living God's Way* (1994) is a follow-up to *Friendship Bible Studies*. This course for higher functioning adults who have mental impairments offers practical guidance on living a Christian life. Components include leader guide and student magazines.
- The life studies series include courses for five short courses for adults with mental impairments. The courses deal with spiritual growth, relationships, and service. Each includes a leader guide and a student magazine. Current mini-course titles are: "We All Have Gifts" (2000), "Growing Closer to God" (1995), "When People Die" (1995), and "Helping Each Other" (1996).
- Other resources are informational and related to starting programs in your church, church membership for people with mental impairments, other friendship groups, and songs. Such resources include:
  - *Expressing Faith in Jesus: Church Membership for People with Mental Impairments* (1995), offers practical suggestions for pastors and church leaders to help people with mental impairments profess their faith.
  - *Time With God* is a devotional tape with words and music, developed for students with developmental disabilities. It's very upbeat with many familiar hymns.

For more product information, visit www.friendship.org or call (888) 866-8966.

Hands-On Bible Curriculum (2001), produced by Group Publishing uses everyday objects to teach about God and His kingdom, just as Jesus did. The curriculum uses whimsical gizmos and fun, creative activities to hold children's attention and teach them important biblical truths. This curriculum would be appropriate for children of any age attending Sunday school. While this material was not developed specifically for students with special needs it is appropriate for students of all abilities. For weekly ideas and teaching tips, visit www.HandsOnBible.com. For more Group Publishing resources, visit www.grouppublishing.com or call (800) 747-6060, Ext. 1502.

Jesus Cares Ministries, a ministry of Lutheran Home Association in Belle Plaine, Minn., offers the following resources:

- *Bible Studies for the Developmentally Disabled* (2001) Prepared by the Wisconsin Lutheran Institutional Lay

Ministry who conduct weekly Bible studies for the developmentally disabled and elderly living in health care centers or rehabilitation centers.

- *Dear Christian Friend* (2004) is an easy-to-use Bible history curriculum that clearly presents God's plan of salvation for children and adults who have developmental disabilities. The curriculum covers 15 Old Testament and 22 New Testament lessons. Lesson leaflets contain bright color illustrations, over 120 custom rebus subjects and beautifully written stories. This high quality resource is Jesus Cares Ministries' most recent publication, and is published in partnership with Northwestern Publishing.
- *Easy Bible Story Projects* includes simple art projects to correspond with *Bible Studies for the Developmentally Disabled*.
- *Joy in Jesus' Love* (2001) is a foundation series for people with very limited vocabulary and understanding. It could be used with any age who are severely or profoundly disabled, or with young children with a limited vocabulary.
- *Our Living Hope* (1991) shares curriculum for teaching developmentally disabled children of God. Each volume is a 10-lesson study: Cycle 1, "In Remembrance of Me"/Christian Faith; Cycle 2, "Seeking His Kingdom"/Christian Life; Cycle 3, "One Body With Many Members"/ Christian Church.

To learn more or to order any of these resources, contact Jesus Cares Ministries at www.jcministries.org or 877-505-3675.

A Place for Me in God's Family (1998) is a devotional booklet, where readers travel along with Travis, a fictional 26 year old, who sees his world and his Bible through the eyes of a young adult with mental disabilities. *NIV* scripture passages merge with Travis' experiences to make God's Word relevant to higher functioning persons with mental disabilities. This book is available through International Bible Society, at www.ibsdirect.com or (800) 524-1588.
Note: *International Bible Society carries a large line of New International Reader's Version Bibles for both children and adults. They also carry a variety of large print Bibles. Check their catalog or Web site for a full list of resources.*

Life Way Christian Resources offers the following resources:

- *Access*, special education Bible study learner guides and teacher guides, are quarterly/dated publications that illustrate God's love and introduce Bible concepts. The format is large and colorful, intended for use with students with mental handicaps. Also available are teaching pictures and a cassette recording of songs.
- *Access*, special education teacher's packet is a resource to help teachers who lead Sunday school classes for adults, youth, or children with mental handicaps.
  Note: *Call the publisher to receive a free sample packet.*
- VBS materials include age-appropriate Bible study activities to help communicate the love of God to those with special needs and mental handicaps. Includes reproducible pages for students' study leaflets as well as all kinds of planning and administrative suggestions. It could also be used in a camp or retreat setting.

For more information contact Life Way Christian Resources at www.lifeway.com or (800) 458-2772.

Non-profit organization, Mephibosheth Ministry, produces a variety of curriculum materials for students with developmental disabilities. Materials cover the areas of evangelism, Christian growth, values, prayer, and inspiration. The booklets are short and could also be used in conjunction with other materials. Contact this ministry at (719) 633-4083 for more information about their various materials.

Nest Entertainment provides a wide variety of animated Bible stories on video. All videos come with an activity book, and are available in closed caption. Nest Entertainment is part of the Direct Sales Association. To find out where videos are available in your area, visit www.nestentertainment.com or call (800) 221-8751. Some LCMS district offices have these videos to borrow.

The Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Program to Improve Catholic Religious Education for Children and Adults with Mental Retardation: A Comprehensive Developmental Curriculum (1996) is a comprehensive curriculum with 260 lesson plans, prayer services, a catechist formation handbook, and parent handbook. It was developed for students between the ages of 5-18 with mild-to-moderate mental retardation. It can be used in an inclusive setting, as a support or a "pull-

out" program, or in the home. This curriculum is written in a developmental mode, so that one section or one lesson builds on the previous section or lesson. For more information contact SilverBurdettGinn Religion at (800) 552-2259.

Color Thru the Bible: Old and New Testament Coloring Book (1989) is a creative and fun way to learn the keyword and theme behind every book of the Old and New Testament. Each page pictures a cartoon to color that helps students remember the big idea. (Other Keyword Learning System materials are also available.)
For more information about Walk Thru the Bible Ministries' resources call (800) 763-5433.

The *New International Readers Version Bible* from Zondervan is available in several version of this lower reading level Bible. They offer kids' study Bibles as well as gift Bibles. Check their catalog or Web site, www.zondervanchurchsource.com for all the different versions of this Bible that they offer.