

New in the Synod Lending Library, July 2011

Now is a great time to review resources for use in the fall. Check out what's new in our library for youth and adult studies.

Gifts of God: The Sacraments. Reformed Church Press. This study guide and DVD offer a great way to introduce and reflect on the sacraments of the Reformed Church. The DVD's two segments highlight the meaning and practice of baptism and communion. The study guide presents the Reformed theology of the sacraments along with questions for reflection and discussion. It's ideal for new-member classes and adult study groups.

Baptism: A sign of Promise (7:30)

Communion: A Feast of Grace (5:30)

Infuse Adult Bible Study Series, Faith Alive Christian Resources.

This new series helps adults (You don't have to be a biblical expert.) discover how the Bible intersects with real life. The studies are inductive, helping people to discover what the Bible is saying by asking questions and seeking answers. Additional insights from maps, timelines, artifacts and other sources help fill in details that connect the particular series study in the context of the larger picture of God's love and care for us. Leader's Notes are available on the Faith Alive website.

There are follow-up ideas and at home readings also. Length of studies varies.

Esther: Courage in a complicated world by Diane Averill, Diane Dykgraaf, Sam Huizenga, and Paul Faber. 2010. Esther's world is filled with twists and turns, happy and fearful moments, and dangerous and deadly outcomes. What's more, it shows God's deliverance and care for his people then and always. Six lessons.

Matthew: One king to rule them all by Marilyn A. McGinnis and Faith Alive Staff. 2010. Matthew introduces us to Jesus Christ from a unique point of view. What was the life of Jesus like? Who was he? Where did he come from? Who opposed him and why? What was his message and purpose for the Jews? For everyone else? While there are eight sessions, each session is divided into two episodes, so a minimum of 12-18 meetings is suggested. The whole book of Matthew is covered.

The Isaiah Vision: An Ecumenical Strategy for Congregational Evangelism by Raymond Fung. World Council of Churches Publication Edition, 2009. It's a classic in missional church study. Fung's strategy finds meaning and action in the local church but has universal appeal and implications. Fung's "agenda" that no children die, the elderly live in dignity and that working men and women do not work in vain, but enjoy the work of their hands, underscore Fung's commitment to mission and social witness issues, while witnessing for Jesus Christ to individuals and neighborhood communities. Fung sees worship, discipleship and partnership as

vital components of evangelism and challenges our understandings of servanthood and sharing. It's an important read that should encourage healthy discussion. Adult re-form, Sparkhouse, 2010. It's a totally new approach to youth ministry that trusts youth to wrestle with the historic Christian faith and theology. It includes two DVD's with 40 hilarious animated short films (5-7 min. each) that frame theological questions that youth really ask, an anti-workbook that's full of individual and group activities, and a fully reproducible leader's guide. Use re-form in youth groups, confirmation classes, even 5th and 6th grade Sunday school classes. 40 sessions.

Because the workbook and leader's guide are so bulky, we can't send mail them out of the office.

The Top 10 Questions about God And How to Respond to Them by Troy Nanninga and Kirsty DePree, Reformed Church in America, 2009. This book provides biblical answers to questions like: Who is God and how can I know him? What is faith? What was the purpose of Jesus dying on the cross? What is a disciple? What is sin? What is salvation? It's appropriate to use in mentoring relationships, new-member classes, and small group settings. This resource is appealing to youth in its form and look and is very "straight-forward". It relies on reflections and questions as responses to the ten questions, so limited in learning styles offered. Sr. High-Adult

Added to the Synod Library, June, 2011

Adult Study

The Eight Blessings: Rediscovering the Beatitudes by Shane Stanford. Abingdon Press, 2007. Stanford uses his personal and pastoral experiences to write commentary and illustrate the eight blessings in Matthew 5. There is a study guide at the back of the book. This study is for groups who want to look more deeply into the text. A bible commentary or dictionary is suggested as second resource.

Mission

Mission Trips That Matter: Embodied Faith for the Sake of the World by Don C. Richter. Upper Room Books, 2008. Richter inspires and guides groups to reflect on their life together as they prepare for, engage in, and interpret short-term mission trips and service projects. He includes spiritual practices, mission trip stories, key biblical passages and activities and reflections before, during and after the trip or project. His books helps us transcend our personal experiences and connect us to the church's mission, anchored in Christ's love.

Missional Church

Journey To The Common Good d by Walter Brueggemann. Westminster John Knox Press, 2010. How can ancient text from the Old Testament summon, engage, and reassure the church in its demanding missional stance? Brueggemann brings together biblical insights and contemporary cultural analysis to offer a roadmap toward the common good through neighborliness, covenanting, and reconstruction.

Skits

The Big Book Of Bible Skits: 104 Seriously Funny Bible Teaching Skits by Tom Boal. Look up skits by scripture passages, bible characters or topic. Good for Sunday school, youth groups, midweek and worship. Reproducibles. Ages 10 years to adult.

The Humongous Book of Bible Skits for Children's Ministry. Group, 2006. 52 field tested, no prep skits, all three minutes or less. Search by bible characters and topical indexes, reproducibles and CD with sound effects, background sounds, and mood music to bring the stories to life. These are relational, experiential, applicable and learner-based.

Youth Ministry

Almost Christian: What The Faith Of Our Teenagers Is Telling The American Church by Kendra Creasy Dean. Oxford University Press, 2010. Based on findings from the National Study of Youth and Religion, this author argues that ardent faith in young people depends upon the churches' ability to recover a sense of mission and model ways of being Christian that embodies God's self-giving love for others.

Do The Hard Thing: A Teenage Rebellion Against Low Expectations by Alex and Brett Harris. Multnomah Book, 2008. The Harris twins challenge teens to challenge culture's low expectations of them and "do the hard thing" for the glory of God. The authors use scripture, history and modern examples to redefine the teen years as the launching pad for life. This book asks some good questions that can initiate living discussions.

Sustainable Youth Ministry: Why most youth ministry doesn't last and what your church can do about it by Mark DeVries. IVP Books, 2008. DeVries pinpoints problems that cause division and burnout and provides practical tools and structure to lay a good foundation for a sustainable youth ministry.

Worship

Children First: Worshipping with the Family of God by Mark Burrows. Abingdon Press, 2010. A worship experience that both children and parents will appreciate. It's designed for children ages 6-10, their families, and their church family. This resource includes 12 outlines for a 45 minute worship service the first Sunday of every month. Each service focuses on a particular theme, such as love, prayer, thankfulness. Children will love the energy, music, interactive prayer and bible stories. There is a puppet skit for each service. Children help lead the service full of art, drama, songs, signing, storytelling, pantomime, poetry and prayer. Responsive, unison, action prayers and litanies included. Music on a CD-ROM.

Children and Youth Ministries, Consistories

Safe Sanctuaries: Reducing the Risk of Abuse in the Church for

Children and Youth by Joy Thornburg Melton. Discipleship Resources, 2008. (two added copies) This expanded and updated edition combines two of Melton's previous books, plus has a section on vulnerable adults and information about safety on the web. It provides guidance for developing policies and procedures to help make congregations safe places. Sample forms, training models for workers, information about recruiting, screening and hiring church workers are included, plus much more. Our synod library also has Melton's Sanctuaries training DVD that references this resource.