

Encountering Scripture



Intergenerational

About this Setting

Intergenerational gatherings are immensely valuable for faith communities. Such events bring together the wonder, awe, and unquestioned faith of young children, the enthusiasm of youth, and the patience, insight, and wisdom of adults. The inquisitive nature of children gives us pause as adults to share and define our faith. Youth are frequently articulate with ideas not previously considered. Adults bring life experience and a witness that exploring and learning about the Christian faith is a lifelong process. All generations bring their skills, interests, and desire to serve. The Christian faith, personal and communal, is not static. Sharing the organic and dynamic nature of our relationship with God intergenerationally is a gift we give to our faith communities.

About this Faith Practice

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Intergenerational Options

These activities may be used to build an intergenerational event for the commencement or conclusion of your series “Encountering Scripture” (up to three hours). Or the activities may be used independently (15–20 minutes each), interwoven with age-specific activities throughout the series. An intergenerational event might be used during a time of year that is already set aside as special, such as Advent, Kwanzaa, Lent, Vacation Bible School, or forty days of prayer for children.

Familiarize yourself with all twelve activities, four in each category of “Exploring and Engaging,” “Discerning and Deciding,” and “Sending and Serving.” Consider the age of participants and the time available for this event, and choose a group of activities that will meet your needs.

For an event lasting one to two hours, choose three or four activities from the list of twelve. There are enough activities for three or four events! Or, choose a single activity (15–30 minutes) to use as the activity at a community meal or other gathering. Wearing nametags is a good idea, as often older and younger members of a church do not know one another’s name. Each activity ends with a prayer appropriate for the end of the session. Gather as a church family to grow together and have fun!

Exploring & Engaging Activities

Whether we are new to a particular faith practice or an old hand with much experience, all of us benefit from new opportunities to explore the shape of the faith practice and to engage the issues of faith that the practice offers. Sometimes this is a matter of learning new ideas about the practice. Sometimes this is more about reflecting on what we have done in our practice. The activities in Exploring and Engaging help us figure out how a faith practice intersects with our life and the life of the community of faith.

Discerning & Deciding Activities

Practicing our faith always involves discernment: naming the realities of our community and world and seeking the will of God for our lives and for the world. We then decide how we will act, what we will do, what values move us forward, and what faith has called us to do. The activities in this category give us opportunity to practice by discerning and deciding.

Sending & Serving Activities

Practicing our faith involves serving others and being sent out as empowered disciples of Jesus Christ. We need time in our exploration to plan how we will serve. We need moments that send us forth blessed by the community from which we venture out. The activities in this category offer opportunities to practice our faith through sending and serving.

Intergenerational Leader Preparation

Sharing scripture across generations is how our faith has thrived. We believe the story. We tell the story. We live the story. Enjoy selecting activities that will enliven the sharing of our faith among your learners. Create an environment in which everyone is welcome and friends of all ages can share and explore their faith. Learning different ways to encounter scripture is a blessing.

BIBLE FOCUS PASSAGES:
2 Kings 2:1-14
John 1:1-14

Prayer: *God of all time, for people of all ages, create in me an unhurried Spirit-filled presence when planning for and being with this community of your people. Create openings in my heart for laughter, sharing, play, healing, learning, and worship. Amen.*



Exploration: Discovery

1 Singing, Humming, Dancing, Clapping with Scripture (Exploring & Engaging)

Leader preparation: Many people encounter and remember scripture through music. Use any of these tunes or add some congregational favorites. Include tunes where children can lead adults. It would be helpful to have an accompanist. With a couple weeks' notice, many youth could accompany. Identify page numbers for the hymns in your congregation's hymnal and write the lyrics on newsprint or project them on a screen, or a combination of both.

Supplies:

- "Jesus Loves Me," http://www.dltk-bible.com/jesus_loves_me.htm
- "I've Got the Joy, Joy, Joy, Joy Down in My Heart," <http://freekidsmusic.com/traditional/got-the-joy-joy-joy-joy.html>
- "Guide My Feet" (tune: Guide My Feet, tune: 8.8.8.10., tune <http://www.hymnsite.com/fws/hymn.cgi?2208>)
- "As We Gather at Your Table" (tune: Beach Spring, 8.7.8.7.D.), <http://www.oremus.org/hymnal/a/a366.html> or tune: <http://www.ccel.org/cceh/0001/x000147.htm>
- "We are Dancing Sarah's Circle" (tune: Jacob's Ladder, 8.8.8.5.), <http://www.theinterpretersfriend.org/songs/w-r-dncg-srh%27s-crcl.html>
- "The B-I-B-L-E," <http://childbiblesongs.com/song-23-b-i-b-l-e.shtml>
- "I Love to Tell the Story," <http://www.hymnsite.com/lyrics/umh156.sht>
- "Word of God Incarnate," <http://www.oremus.org/hymnal/o/o714.html>

Enjoy an old-fashioned hymn sing. Team up adults who know how to read a hymn with those who are learning to read hymns. Sing, dance, clap, and create movements for verses as appropriate. Celebrate how music helps us encounter scripture.

Prayer: *Creative Spirit, for tunes that stir our soul, for words that inspire our actions, and for rhythms that energize our feet and hands, we are grateful. Keep a song in our hearts so you are in every heartbeat. Amen.*

2 People from the Bible (Exploring & Engaging)

Leader preparation: Prepare slips of paper, each with the name of a biblical character on it. Use familiar characters such as Jesus, Noah, Jonah, Moses, Adam and Eve, Mary, Joseph, a wise man from the east, a shepherd, Peter, John the Baptist, Abraham, Sarah, Esther. If your group is very familiar with the Bible, you might add characters such as Daniel, Paul, Joseph, Judas, Samuel, Ruth, or King David. If you have recently told or heard a Bible story together, include characters from that story.

Supplies:

- Bibles or Bible story books with pictures
- (optional) Bible times costumes
- slips of paper with biblical characters

Divide into groups of three to four people of mixed ages. Give each group a slip of paper with a biblical character. Their job is to present that character to the rest of the group in the form of a short skit. They can speak, but they must not use the name of the character. Give groups time to prepare their skits. Then present the skits to one another. Continue until people are all sure they know who the person is, then reveal the name. (Do not make this a competition. Let it be a way to find out more about biblical characters). Ask: *Do you know a Bible person who is very old? Do you know a Bible person who is very young? If you could be any person from the Bible, who would you want to be? Why?*



Exploration: Scripture

3 Nature: Light Shining in Darkness (Discerning & Deciding)

Leader preparation: The passage John 1:1–14 may be difficult for children because there are so many metaphors. The “light shining in the darkness” is a sacred Christian metaphor. Christians believe that Jesus is the Light. The YouTube video includes images from the Hubble deep space experiment where scientists took photographs of seemingly black space, void of light. The result was a new understanding of creation and the magnitude of God’s creativity. If children can understand that God created light shining in darkness, then it is easier for them to explore the metaphors in John’s Gospel. They can grow into a different awareness as they mature. They can grow into the metaphor, just as youth and adults do, experience by experience. Select images to show the group. Choose your favorite three or four images from <http://hubblesite.org/gallery/album/> or preview and bookmark a seven-minute video on the Hubble deep space experiment from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oAVjF_7ensg. You will need Internet access to show the video.

Supplies:

- computer (Internet access optional) and projector or large screen
- Bible

In the Gospel of John, John writes about “light shining in the darkness.” Read aloud John 1:5. Discuss: *Where do we find light shining in the darkness?* (Stars, moon, flashlights, nightlight, street lights) *This video (or pictures) are from the Hubble telescope, which takes photographs as it travels through space and then sends the images back to earth for scientists to interpret.* View the video or look at the selected images.

What one word describes your thoughts about the video or the images? What do you think of a God who made light shining in darkness?

In John's Gospel Jesus is compared to light. *Why might John have thought Jesus was like light?* In popular culture when a person is going through a difficult time, you may hear someone reassure that person by saying, "There's a light at the end of the tunnel." Christians often remind one another that "the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it." *Why do we do that? What is the significance of that sentence?* Invite people to share what the image means to them, perhaps by talking about a personal experience. Once the children understand the metaphor, grant them an opportunity to share a difficult time (and an adult can highlight ways that a light may be shining). Close by reminding everyone that as Jesus is a Light, so they, too, are lights to each other.

Prayer: Jesus, help us to always recognize your light, your presence in our good times and in our sad times. Keep us aware that you triumph over everything that makes us fearful or that brings tears to our eyes. Amen.

④ Experiencing Miracles: Elijah and Elisha (Discerning & Deciding)

Leader preparation: Read the 2 Kings passage at least twice, so you understand the sequence of events. You will walk your group through "signposts" or "stations" in your room. You do not need a large space, although you may use one. There are four locations (beginning, Bethel, Jericho, Jordan River) so the four corners or four sides of the room will work well. If you have a small group, move from station to station and read from the Bible at each station, inviting the group to imagine and experience each scene of the story as you travel. You might plan ahead and have people prepared to represent Elijah, Elisha, two people for the river (so they can roll apart), four or more people to be the fiery chariot, four or more people to be the fiery horses, and an assortment of prophets. You may also have people who could depict the whirlwind. Gather costumes or symbols to differentiate the prophets from Bethel and Jericho, such as a sash, yarn tied at waist, necklace.

Supplies:

- Bible and a children's Bible
- signs or symbols that indicate Bethel, Jericho, and the Jordan River
- symbols for prophets

Ask someone to read the 2 Kings passage from the Bible or from the children's Bible. This activity walks the group through the cities to which Elijah and Elisha traveled. Let them experience or act out the story from the Bible. Begin at a doorway. You or a reader may read 2 Kings 2:1–2. Then Elijah and Elisha travel to Bethel and the remainder of the group can be the prophets waiting in Bethel. At Bethel, read 2 Kings 2:3–4. Now Elijah and Elisha travel to Jericho and the prophets will be Jericho's prophets and not Bethel's prophets (add a sash or necklace or hat if you have the same group of prophets). At Jericho, read 2 Kings 2:5–6. Everyone moves to the Jordan River, where two people are lying on the floor. Read 2 Kings 2:7–8. When Elijah "strikes" the water, ask the "river" to roll to the opposite side so Elijah and Elisha can walk between them. Roll the river back together and read 2 Kings 2:9–14. Encourage the fiery chariot and fiery horses to be active. Encourage Elijah to ascend in a whirlwind. There's not a "right" way to do this so allow plenty of imaginative play. Encourage Elisha to be amazed and grief-stricken. Then return to the Jordan River. Elisha "strikes" the river and it parts again. He walks back toward Jericho.

At the end ask the people what they like about this story. Ask the two river people to lie down again. Ask them to separate and allow each person, one by one, to experience walking through the water, imagining themselves as either Elijah or Elisha. Ask other people to be the river so the original “river” can experience walking through the miracle. If desired, you may walk back through the river, one by one, to Jericho. Can you imagine this story being told, generation to generation, over hundreds of years until it came to be written down? Say: *I wonder why it is included in our Bible. What do you think God might be saying to us through this story?*

Prayer: *God of miracles from creation to now, keep us mindful of your presence in our lives. Help us to be like the prophets, willing to travel to unexpected places. Grant us the courage to pass through the openings you create for our faith to grow. Amen.*



Exploration: Discipleship



5 Art: Edible Finger Painting (Sending & Serving)

Leader preparation: This is a fun and messy project that people of all ages enjoy. Prepare one sheet of waxed paper per person, slightly smaller than the size of a placemat. Prepare the colors ahead of time and ask people to spoon their “paint” onto the waxed paper. Mix vanilla pudding or topping with food coloring of different colors and place it in bowls or dishes with spoons. If desired you may serve graham crackers and they can eat their painting.

Supplies:

- Bible or a children’s Bible
- artwork: “No-Traveller’s Borne” by Jess, https://secure3.convio.net/ucc/site/Ecommerce/1282230595?VIEW_PRODUCT=true&product_id=17101&store_id=1401
- waxed paper
- food coloring
- small bowls or plates, spoons
- vanilla pudding, white cake frosting (thinned slightly with hot water), or whipped topping
- covering for the tables
- (optional) graham crackers

Ask everyone to wash their hands. Seat them at the table and place a rectangle of waxed paper in front of each. Next look at “No-Traveller’s Borne.” After a few moments of silent gazing, read aloud John 1:1–5. No discussion is needed. If desired, read the passage a second time from a different translation. Place the bowls of “paint” medium in front of participants. Then, invite them to paint the John passage on the waxed paper using their fingers and the colored topping. When finished, they may scrap the “paint” on to a graham cracker and eat the treat, or they can lick their fingers.

6 Testify: Sharing the Good News (Sending & Serving)

Leader preparation: This relates to the story of John the Baptist, who “came to testify to the light” (John 1:6–9). Ponder what you tell people about God and be ready to share a few examples. You will probably want to create intergenerational groupings around tables. You may do this activity as a large group, but there’s more opportunity to speak in smaller groups. Decide what you would like to do with the wooden craft sticks. You may want to create a display, mount the shapes in a central location as a reminder, or save the sticks for use for another activity. Place Christian testimony in a positive light. You may have children who have been part of a contentious custody battle, who have been abused, or who have witnessed a crime. Children (and adults) sometimes experience courtrooms and testimony in a stressful environment. Christian testimony includes sharing the Christian faith in a way that is respectful to the listener.

Supplies:

- Bible
- wooden craft sticks in a variety of colors
- colored washable markers
- string, tape, or colored duct tape, large marshmallows, modeling clay or something else that can hold the wooden craft sticks together

Read John 1:1–9. Discuss: *What do you think it means that John the Baptist “testified to the light”? In faith communities we use the word “testify” to mean talking to other people about God, sharing how God is part of our life, or acting and living in ways that show God’s loving kindness in our world. If you met someone who didn’t know about Jesus what would you say? What are some ways you “testify to the light” in your life? On each wooden craft stick write one way you make known the light of God through words or actions. Encourage older children and adults to help those who cannot write. When finished, spread out the wooden craft sticks. What might we make with these? Distribute the materials you have provided to hold the sticks together. How many different shapes can you make using all the wooden craft sticks? Let’s create a testimony wall, a testimony circle, a testimony road, a testimony house, a testimony bridge, or another construction. At the end, remind the group that all of us share and show God’s light in different ways. Invite those who wish to do so to tell one way they might “testify to the light” this coming week.*

Prayer: Holy One, we want to tell people about you. We also want our lives to be a living testament of your love for us. May all of our words, actions, and thoughts reveal your light and love. Amen.



Exploration: Christian Tradition

7 Jesus Prayer (Discerning & Deciding)

Leader preparation: Most congregations regularly use the Prayer of Jesus in worship. Sometimes we say it automatically, without being attentive to the meaning. This activity slows us down so we can pay attention to the meaning. Use the version of the Jesus prayer that your congregation usually uses. Bring Bibles in several different versions, including *The Message* and the Contemporary English Version, or go to <http://www.biblegateway.com/> and obtain four or five different versions of Matthew 6:9–13 (including *The Message* and the Contemporary English Version and a version in French or Spanish). Post the following questions for small group discussion so that they can be easily seen or make copies for the groups.

- To whom is the prayer addressed?
- What other words do we use to address God?
- What does the prayer ask for the world?
- What does the prayer ask for us?
- How the prayer end, and what does this ending mean?

Supplies:

- Bibles in several different versions and languages, or different versions of Matthew 6:6–13

Start by asking who knows the Jesus prayer in a different language (include sign language). *Which language?* Have someone say the prayer in the version your congregation uses, and then invite others to say the prayer in different languages. Divide into small groups, each with a variety of ages. Give each group a Bible (or different version of Matthew 6:6–13).

Ask each group to have someone read aloud the prayer from Matthew 6:6–13 in the version they have been given, and then to discuss the meaning of the prayer. They may refer to the discussion questions you provided. Bring the group back together. Ask each group to share the version of the prayer they were given and to share one idea from their conversation. *Why is the prayer different in different translations of the Bible? Which version did you find easiest to understand? What new meaning did you discover in the prayer? What does “amen” mean? “Amen” is a Hebrew word meaning “so be it.” See Matthew 8:10. Pray the prayer of Jesus together using the version you usually say in your congregation.*

8 Bible Treasure Hunt (Exploring & Engaging)

Leader preparation: This activity should be affirming and possibly challenging for your congregation. Decide whether you want each small group to investigate a different part of the church, or whether you want each group to investigate the entire building. Include interior and exterior spaces (weather permitting). This activity will be more successful if you can include in each group at least one person who knows the church well. If you have time ahead of the session, prepare a treasure hunt for the group, printed out and copied, with spaces write the location of each item, such as:

- Find four pictures of Noah’s ark.
- Find pictures of five women from the Bible.
- Find three verses from the Bible that are not in a book.
- Where is the largest Bible in the building?
- Find a Bible bound in leather.

Obviously, you will need to create a treasure hunt for your own setting. But, make all the items on the list relate to this faith practice of encountering scripture.

Supplies:

- Bible
- notepads or treasure hunt instructions
- pens or pencils

Divide into small groups with a variety of ages in each group. Give each group a writing pad and pencils or pens, or a copy of the treasure hunt list. Their task is to walk through the church. During the walk they should write down or draw where and how they notice something related to the Bible or scripture, such as a picture of a Bible, an actual Bible, a Bible quotation, a verse written in a stained glass window or carved on a communion table, or a symbol from a Bible story. When possible include the biblical reference or idea. Gather back for conversation about what the groups find. Ask: *Based on what you found, would you say the Bible is important in our congregation? How is it important to us as a faith community? How is the Bible important to your family?*



Exploration: Context and Mission



9 A Child Advocates for Children (Sending & Serving)

Leader preparation: In the story of Esther, we meet a woman who finds a reserve of courage and faith deep inside herself. Plan a way to tell the story of Esther to the group using the outline from the attachment or from a children’s Bible storybook.

We find that same courage in Thandiwe Chama (pronounced Tan-dee-way Chama). Read “An Advocate for Children” several times so you can read or tell it with conviction, or plan to show a two-minute cartoon video of Thandiwe’s story produced by Kids Rights, found at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dHe91ewt7ts>.

Supplies:

- “An Advocate for Children: Thandiwe Chama, Zambia,” Attachment: Activity 9a
- “Brave Esther,” Attachment: Activity 9b, or a children’s Bible storybook that has this story
- (optional) computer with Internet connection and projector

Tell the story of Esther from a children’s Bible storybook, or use the outline “Brave Esther.” Ask: *What did Esther do that was really brave? What stories can you tell of people who do brave things like that today?* Explain that there are many brave people in the world, and some of them are children. Tell or read the story “An Advocate for Children.” After the story, invite participant’s comments with questions such as: *What did you think about this story of Thandiwe? Why do you think she wanted to go to school so much? Why do you think she was able to do what she did?* Emphasize that Thandiwe was both brave and determined. Invite conversation about other biblical heroes and heroines who inspire us.

10 Creation: Great Barrier Reef (Deciding & Discerning)

Leader preparation: This activity focuses on the Great Barrier Reef in Australia. Gather information about local environmental or water protection issues. One responsibility of being children of God is to be stewards of creation. Review the links and the videos. You may also ask other group members or families to review the links and come prepared to share information. Discussions about water conservation can be sacred conversations. The mission project is not detailed. You and your group will need to encounter scripture and be called to a project. Perhaps you want to inform members about water conservation, or support a local effort, or support the Great Barrier Reef, or learn to make rain barrels, or learn about native plants which, once established, reduce water runoff in your area. Because of recent environmental disasters, the group members may focus on water stewardship as related to gas and oil consumption. There are numerous options. Select a project that captures the interests of your group. Use the following links for ideas:

- <http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au/> link for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park—includes the most recent Reef Outlook Report
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wbNeIn3vVKM>—four-minute National Geographic video
- http://www.on.ec.gc.ca/reseau/watertips_e.html—water conservation tips from Environment Canada
- <http://www.monolake.org/about/waterconservation>—effort in California to reclaim a high desert lake ecosystem; also has water conservation ideas

Supplies:

- Bible
- markers and newsprint or whiteboard
- Bible
- computer with Internet connection and projector

Read aloud John 1:1–5. In the beginning God was creating. Ask: *What parts of our community or ecosystem reveal the marvel and wonder of God’s creation?* Record the responses on newsprint or a whiteboard. View the video of the Great Barrier Reef at <http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au/>. The Great Barrier Reef, located on Australia’s east coast, is a World Heritage Site, meaning it is one of our global environmental treasures. Ask: *What is special about the Great Barrier Reef? Why is it so important globally? What can we do to help protect it?* Move the conversation to national or lo-

cal issues. If someone reviewed the water tips from Environment Canada or from Mono Lake, ask that this information be presented. Ask: *How can a commitment to water conservation honor God's creation? How does such a commitment help us experience the faith practice of encountering scripture? How can we help with water conservation on a local level? What commitment could we make to water conservation that could involve all of us as a faith community?* Recruit volunteers to serve on a planning team for such an effort.

Prayer: *Imaginative and Generous Creator, guide us as we try to make the waters healthy in our area, in our country, and around the world. Keep us attentive to our daily actions, which have global consequences. We strive to be faithful stewards of your gift of creation. Amen.*



Exploration: Future and Mission



🎬 Film Clip: Tale of Despereaux (Exploring & Engaging)

Leader preparation: The film clip used in this activity is “Reading” from the beginning of the movie *Tale of Despereaux*. The movie is based on the book by the same title, written by Kate DiCamillo. Preview the clip prior to your gathering time, or borrow the movie from a library and advance to the correct location. The film clip can be found at <http://www.traileraddict.com/clip/tale-of-despereaux/despereaux-caught-up-reading>. Read the activity. Adapt the questions depending on the ages of children in your group. *Tale of Despereaux* is also a good choice for a congregational movie night.

Supplies:

- computer with Internet access and projector, or the DVD from a library or rental location

The movie *Tale of Despereaux* tells a story about a small talking mouse that has great dreams. Show the film clip. After the film use these or similar questions for discussion:

- Did Despereaux know all the stories when he opened the book?
- What did he like? (Sword fights, bravery)
- What surprised him? (He liked stories he didn't think he would like.)
- What was special about the princess? (She had hope, and when you have hope you are no one's prisoner.)
- What is the Christian's book? (Hold up a Bible)
- What kind of stories are in here? (Stories about truth, justice, bravery, battles, God, and Jesus). Like Despereaux, we may learn to like things we never suspected we would like.
- I wonder how the princess knew her prince was coming.
- What do Christians believe or know?
- How do we know that? (The Bible tells us so and people share their faith stories)

Say: *Despereaux was not reading the Bible, but we can. We can find adventure, poems, funny stories, sad stories, and many ways to learn about God. We can find hope and joy. The Bible is amazing!*

Divide into small groups with a variety of ages in each group. Invite the participants to answer the following questions:

- What is your favorite part of the Bible? Why?
- Who is your favorite Bible person? Why?
- What is your favorite verse or story? Why?

Ask participants to describe a time when a Bible verse or passage has been important to them. (If younger children have difficulty, prompt them to think of holidays that connect to a particular Bible story such as Easter or Christmas.)

Prayer: God, thank you for the Bible. Thank you for inspiring people to write the words that tell us about you and your son, Jesus. Thank you for giving us a book that we can read, share, and enjoy our entire life. Amen.

Blessings from the Bible (Sending & Serving)

Leader preparation: The laying on of hands is an ancient tradition. During worship, the laying on of hands is sometimes used when church officers are installed or when youth and adults are commissioned before a mission trip. Think about the many ways we bless one another. Write the following passages on five separate pieces of paper, one passage per paper: John 13:5; Numbers 6:24–26; Matthew 19:13–14; 2 Timothy 1:2; 1 Samuel 16:13.

Supplies:

- materials to use for blessing rituals, including decorative or brightly colored pieces of fabric, a dish containing a small quantity of olive oil, flowers, candles in holders with matches, a bowl of water
- Bibles

The Bible has many examples of blessings—rituals and words that bless others by laying on hands, anointing, or using words. Divide into five groups. Each small group will plan a way to bless others in the larger group using ideas from scripture. Give each group a scripture passage and a Bible. Ask them to read the verse they have been assigned and to think of a way they can offer a blessing to others in the group. They can use words or gestures, symbols, and so forth. Encourage them to use their verse as inspiration. However, groups are not restricted to just that verse. Show the materials you have provided. Give groups time to prepare; then gather back in a circle. If one of your group members needs to be seated, then have everyone sit in a circle. Otherwise, gather standing. Have each group share a blessing ritual with others in the group.

Reflect

Which activities did the participants enjoy? Music? Video? Movie? Acting? Interactive choices? Discussion options? Mission? Art? Prayer? Your response will give you information about how to help them encounter scripture with different Bible verses. Consider how, through guiding others, you also encountered scripture at a deeper level.

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Attachment: Activity 9a

An Advocate for Children: Thandiwe Chama, Zambia

Even when she was very young, Thandiwe Chama (pronounced Tan-dee-way Cha-ma) knew that education was important for all children. When her school was closed because there were no teachers, eight-year-old Thandiwe was not willing to stay home and help her mother or play with her friends.

No, not Thandiwe. She would not accept that there was no school for her and the other children in her village. She organized her friends, and along with sixty other children she walked to find another school. Amazed by their determination, the new school took them in. This only made Thandiwe Chama more determined to see that all children have an education.

Another matter that concerned her was children with AIDS. She talked about the plight of these children in church, when others older than she tried to avoid these children. She and a friend wrote and illustrated a book to explain AIDS to young children. It was called "The Chicken with AIDS."

In 2007, when Thandiwe was sixteen, she received the International Children's Peace Prize* for her achievements in relation to children's rights in Zambia, in particular the right to education. She was one of twenty-eight children around the world who were nominated. The prize is one hundred thousand Euros that the winner can give to a project that helps others and a statuette called "the Nkosi." The statuette is named after Nkosi Johnson, a South African boy who brought international attention to children with HIV/AIDS and founded the Nkosi's Haven home for HIV-positive mothers and children.

What an exciting day that was for Thandiwe. "It's so important to know that also a child has rights. At school I learned about rights. And I knew then that this was something I wanted to fight for. Because if children are given an opportunity, they for sure can contribute in making this world a better place."

*The International Children's Peace Prize is given annually to a child whose courageous or remarkable actions have made a difference in working on problems that affect children around the world.

Attachment: Activity 9b

Brave Esther

Use this outline to tell the story of Esther:

- Esther becomes queen
- The king of Persia holds a beauty contest to find a new queen to replace Vashti, who disobeyed his orders.
- Esther, a Jew, is selected as the new queen, but no one knows she is Jewish.
- Enemies of the Jews have the ear of the king
- Haman, angry that the Jew Mordecai will not bow down to the king, devises a plan to get rid of all the Jews.
- Mordecai hears about Haman's plot and gets word to Esther.
- He tells Esther that perhaps she is queen for just this time to save her people (Esther 4:16).
- Esther stands up for her people, the Jews.
- Brave Esther asks to speak to the king, an act that could get her killed.
- She plans dinners for the king and Haman, and then she reveals Haman's plot and that she is a Jew.
- The king saves Esther and her people and punishes Haman.
- The Jewish people today celebrate Esther's bravery in the festival of Purim.