

BIBLICAL RESOURCES

for Congregational Life

*Living God, Speak your inviting Word.
Embrace us. Draw us together as we seek your way in the world.
Challenged, fed, and forgiven,
send us to serve in Christ's name. Amen*

As part of the ELCA's **Book of Faith Initiative**, we offer this collection of resources highlighting a variety of tools for studying the Bible. For the next five years, congregations and individuals are encouraged to engage in a deeper understanding of scripture through intentional study. As a church grounded in the means of grace—word and sacrament—we come together each Sunday for the proclamation of the Word and the celebration of the sacraments. With Christians around the world, we explore the weekly texts out of our deep hunger to know and be known by God. In addition to Sunday's study of the Bible, many members of congregations participate in weekly or monthly bible study including personal reading and meditation on scripture. The vision for the **Book of Faith Initiative** is that the whole church become more fluent in the language of faith—scripture—so that “we might live into our calling as a people renewed, enlivened, and empowered by the Word.” The first resources published by Augsburg Fortress for the **Book of Faith Initiative** are: *Opening the Book of Faith: Lutheran Insights for Bible Study*, introducing key elements of the initiative and four methods for studying the Bible; a set of Adult Bible Study introductory courses offered in the fall of 2008 followed by a spring 2009 launch of major Bible studies; and the *Lutheran Study Bible* to be released in March, 2009. As resources continue to be developed, they will be posted at www.elca.org/bookoffaith and www.augsburgfortress.org/community/bookoffaith We'll also add them to our collection.

Julie K. Aageson
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TOOLS for STUDY

A timely video series by Mark Allan Powell, **How Do Lutherans Interpret the Bible?**, provides a good overview about the ways we use the Bible. Four sessions and a guide. Equally good is a segment by Powell called “Where Did the Bible Come From?” in the series **Wouldn't You Like to Know?** (VT2487-2488) (VT2422)

The Bible Tutor by Craig Koester brings the Bible to life, offering an informational look at people, dates, and geography. It includes maps, illustrations, photographs. (CDR7)

The Bible Guide (Augsburg Fortress) is a treasure of biblical facts and information. (B2652)

Crossway's **The Bible's Big Story: Our Story** by Harry Wendt outlines time line codes as a way of following the Old and New Testament stories. (PR662)

Who's Who in the Bible: An Illustrated Biographical Dictionary is an important reference for identifying and describing biblical characters. (B2117)

The Resource Center maintains a **collection of Bibles** for children as well as many different Bible translations. We also have a number of reference texts and handbooks.

For maps, an index of Bible places, and texts about Biblical sites, **The Student Bible Atlas** and **The Student Bible Guide** both by Tim Dowley are helpful. (PR403, PR405)

Brief biographies of 234 important people in the Bible can be found in Robert Backhouse's **The Student Guide to Bible People**. (PR404)

For basic overviews of biblical material, two videos, **The Bible: What's It All About and Understanding the Bible**, provide background about the formation of the Bible. (VT967, VT1017)

The Resource Center loans **The Bible on Cassette: Faith Comes by Hearing**, a set of audiocassettes of both the Old and New Testaments. (C128)

Elie Wiesel introduces the universal themes of Old Testament stories in an artistic and fascinating video series called **GREAT FIGURES OF THE BIBLE**. In retelling the stories of creation, Cain and Abel, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Job, Moses, David, Wiesel's commentary conveys the moral and ethical dilemmas confronted by people of every time and faith. (VT1248-1253)

For a Bible survey, **History's Golden Thread: the History of Salvation** by Sofia Cavalletti is an interesting and concise overview of the biblical story. (B2470)

Remembering the Women: Women's Stories from Scripture is a beautifully written and illustrated book highlighting the stories of women in the Bible. (B2386)

For a basic introduction to the Bible, Robert Kysar's **Opening the Bible: What It Is, Where It Came From, What It Means for You** provides helpful background. (B2351)

Craig Koester's **A Beginner's Guide to Reading the Bible** is another good introduction. (B862)



INTERESTING APPROACHES to the Study of the Bible

For an interesting cross-section of approaches to studying the Bible, the following people have made significant contributions:

- Walter Brueggemann, **Imagination: New Approaches to the Bible** Brueggemann interacts with biblical texts to imagine a world “quite unlike the world we ordinarily take for granted.” (VT1027)
- Terence Fretheim, **Interpreting the Old Testament** Fretheim helps viewers with a clearer understanding of how the Hebrew writings came to us, what they mean, and how to interpret them. (VT1509-1511)
- Dan Erlander, **Manna and Mercy** This hand-written booklet illustrates the history of God’s unfolding promise from Genesis to Revelation. (PR170)
- Amy Jill Levine, **What’s God Up To?** This engaging biblical scholar asks edgy questions of familiar bible stories helping viewers consider multiple meanings and new insights. (VT2393-2394)
- **John Shea** is a gifted and compelling biblical storyteller. We have a wide selection of his books, audio cassettes, and videos.
- **N.T. Wright**, New Testament teacher and scholar, helps interpret the major themes of the New Testament in helpful video presentations including the gospels and the letters of Paul. (VT2290, VT2115, VT2305, VT2288)
- James Sanders, **Biblical Intertextuality: The Bible is Full of Itself** Challenging the idea that one can fully understand the meaning of a biblical verse based solely on that verse alone, Sanders explains the concept of biblical intertextuality. (VT2130)
- Amy Jill Levine and Walter Brueggemann, **The Bible: Fact or Fiction?** Should passages such as the creation accounts be taken literally or symbolically? How do we know which to believe? (VT1897)
- For many of us, John Shelby Spong’s **Rescuing the Bible from Fundamentalism** is a refreshing challenge to literal interpretations that can broaden our understanding of biblical texts. (B1101)

*The great crisis in the church is that the Bible
has been largely domesticated.*

–Walter Brueggemann

- A new commentary series **...For Everyone** provides practical, accessible background information, useful explanations and suggestions, and thoughtful commentary by N.T. Wright about how the texts can be relevant for our lives today. (B2980=)
- For an interesting approach to the Old Testament, Bruce Feiler’s **Walking the Bible: A Journey by Land Through the Five Books of Moses** is an informed and inspiring way to think about the Hebrew Bible. (B2789) A PBS video and companion study guide are also available. Go to www.leaderresources.org/walkingthebible

- For a helpful introduction to the study of the Bible, **In the Beginning: Critical Concepts for the Study of the Bible** by James W. Aageson provides a framework for thinking about how we do biblical interpretation. (B2419)
- Barbara Bruce's **7 Ways of Teaching the Bible to Adults** helps pastors and teachers explore the Bible based on multiple intelligences. (B2753)
- **Discovering the Bible** is a complete video kit including four video segments for introducing the Bible, printed resources, a leader's guide, and reproducible worksheets. (VT1532)

*The critical study of the Bible should make it
more accessible, not less.*

-Leander Keck

FOR CHILDREN and FAMILIES

- ◆ A collection of 50 multimedia Bible stories for preschoolers called **THE PLAY AND LEARN BIBLE** is available on CD-Rom. (CDR1)
- ◆ **Bible Stories for the 40 Days** is a beautiful collection of stories for children by Melissa Nussbaum. (PR479)
- ◆ Join a fascinating journey back into the world of the Bible in **THE AMAZING EXPEDITION BIBLE** that will help children gain skills, confidence, and Bible knowledge. (CDR10)
- ◆ For a visual way of understanding more about the Bible, **FAMILY BIBLE CARDS** include information about people, great events, places, daily life and times, miracles and mysteries, plants and animals of the Bible. (K132)
- ◆ A selection of Bible games includes **BIBLE Pictionary**, **Bible Trivia**, **In Other Words: Bible Edition**, and **The Family Bible Game for Lutherans**. (G10), (G11), (G24), (G27).
- ◆ **Teaching Children Bible Basics** by Barbara Bruce provides parents and teachers with 32 interactive Bible lessons for helping children learn to use the Bible. These easy-to-present lessons are designed to stimulate creativity and critical thinking in children, and include ideas and activities that teach how the Bible came to be, how to use the Bible, the significance of the Torah, and the important stories of the Old and New Testaments. (PR680)
- ◆ From Augsburg Fortress, an excellent Bible resource for children and families is "**Davey and Goliath's Devotions**," based on a different Bible story each week.
- ◆ **The Lutheran Handbooks I and II** (AFP) include sections about Bible facts, study, interpretation, and more. (PR914, PR982)
- ◆ A complete learning system to help students understand words, people, places, and events of the Bible can be found in **The Student Bible Dictionary**. This resource includes maps and charts and all kinds of basic information for all ages. (B3440)

