

# CROSS + GEN EDUCATION

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# LIVING THE WORD

Narrative Lectionary



Exploring God's Story Together  
CROSS + GEN EDUCATION

Leader's Guide

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## Lesson #2-1

# GOD CREATES HUMANS

Genesis 2:4b-25



### Key Verse:

Then the LORD God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.”  
Genesis 2:18

### The Point:

We are created to be partners in God’s work.

### Making Connections:

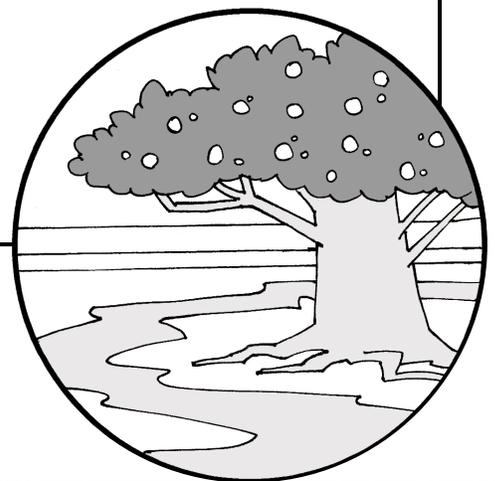
God Creates Family

### Bible Nuts & Bolts:

What Is the Bible? (Old Testament)

### Spiritual Practice:

Prayer



# ACTIVITIES A LA CARTE

## ACTIVITIES

## SUPPLIES

### INTO THE STORY

#### GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Share stories of important relationships.

10 MIN.

- † Groupings Guide
- † Materials for chosen cross+generational grouping
- † Scrap paper
- † Pens or pencils
- † Optional: calculators or cell phones

### BIBLE NUTS & BOLTS

#### THE BIBLE AS STORY

Share your favorite Bible stories.

10 MIN.

- † Bibles
- † White board or mural paper
- † Markers

### MAKING CONNECTIONS

#### CREATION CARE

Called to be in relationship to all creation.

10 MIN.

- † Paper
- † Pens or pencils

### LEARNING THE STORY

#### THE CREATION

Make a creation mural.

15 MIN.

- † Bibles
- † Mural paper
- † Markers or crayons

### LIVING THE STORY

#### LITANY OF PRAISE

Create a litany based on God's great creation.

5 MIN.

- † Paper
- † Pens or pencils

# ACTIVITIES A LA CARTE

## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

### NAME THAT CREATION

Play a game to complete categories.

**10 MIN.** † Paper  
 † Pens or pencils  
 † Index cards  
 † Timer

### TOGETHER OR ALONE?

Visualize activities alone or in groups.

**10 MIN.** † Large pieces of paper  
 † Marker  
 † Masking tape

## SENDING THE STORY

**5 MIN.** † Sharing God's Story @ Home



# LIVING THE WORD

*Exploring God's Story Together  
Narrative Lectionary, Year 2*

Cross+Generational Ministry has at its core the concept that faith is formed through meaningful relationships. When we connect with people of a different generation, we are able to learn from them and share our own experiences, no matter what age we are. We find our place in God's story best by exploring that story as community.

Effective cross+generational experiences are:

- *Experiential*
- *Interactive*
- *Engaging*
- *Story-centered*
- *Home-based*
- *Equalizing*

all of which promote an **encounter with God**. All of the activities included in this leader guide are intended to engage these principles, through intentional cross+generational interaction and active, creative activities that bring the Bible story to life in our lives.

We pass on the faith through every action, experience, or relationship that nurtures a transformative relationship of trust with God and shapes the way we see and interact with God's world. When we do this in meaningful, intergenerational relationships, our faith is enriched from the diversity of the experiences we share with each other. Our communities are strengthened, and we have confidence in our sense of belonging to God and with each other.

# BACKGROUND FOR LEADERS

## Making Connections

The narrative of this season's readings reveals a God who is focused on relationship. Today's lesson presents a God who desires humans to be in relationship with God, with one another, and with creation. In the coming weeks, we will learn rich stories that present the promises, struggles, and joys of being in relationship, and allow us to experience the complexity of interaction, both human and divine.

## Story Summary:

### *God Creates Humans*

Today begins the Narrative Lectionary year. We will start at the very beginning—or at least at the very beginning, part two. The story of creation is first told in Genesis 1:1–2:4a. The narrative told in Genesis 2:4b-25 gives a different perspective on creation, told in light of the creation of humanity. This version is all about the creation of relationship. God gave the first human the task of caring for (being in relationship with) the garden, and then set out to create a partner for him. We read of the creation of all manner of animals, none of which was the best partner for the human. Finally, God created for the man a human partner, one of the same flesh, to spend life with him. God presented the man with his limits, and laid out the expectation that he should never eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Even humans living in paradise had limitations, which reminds us that God places expectations on our lives, and expects our obedience.

## The Point

**We are created to be partners in God's work.**

This text presents a beautiful description of the garden that God planted and over which God

gave responsibility to humankind. The first tasks in creation, it seems, were to create harmony between land, water, plant, animal, and humans. Our inward focus may be what breaks the harmony, but God's capacity for love and drive to be in relationship with us allows that harmony to be reestablished time and time again. The first human was given responsibility to name and care for the garden and the animals. As descendants of this first person, we are given responsibility to carry on with God's plan for global relationship.

## Bible Nuts & Bolts:

### *What Is the Bible? (Old Testament)*

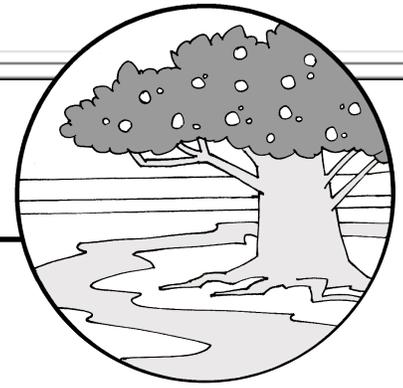
The Bible is a well-known book that has been read and interpreted throughout history. The biblical narrative contains many different stories that have different characters and plot lines. Though these stories may be different, they all have one theme in common—these stories tell us about God and about our lives as humans. The Bible is a collection of stories that tell us more about the relationship humanity has with God, and about the relationships that we have with each other. Two versions of the creation story begin this great narrative.

## Spiritual Practice: Prayer

All that exists is God's creation, but it is our responsibility to care for creation. Does this make you feel powerful? Does it make you anxious? When we think about the amazing scope of God's creation, we respond in awe and wonder. This response can take many creative forms, but each response is a prayer praising and thanking God for the gift of creation.



# LESSON PLAN



## INTO THE STORY (10 MINUTES)

### GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Share stories of important relationships.

*You will need:*

- † Groupings Guide
- † Materials for chosen cross+generational grouping
- † Scrap paper
- † Pens or pencils
- † Optional: calculators or cell phones

*Before class:*

1. Determine how you would like to group participants at their tables (in a cross+generational grouping), using the Groupings Guide.
2. Prepare the materials indicated in the Guide.

*During class:*

1. Welcome the class and instruct them to group themselves cross+generationally according to the method you have selected from the Groupings Guide.
2. **If someone is sitting alone, please introduce yourself, and invite them to join you. Young children who are not comfortable leaving their families should sit at a table with someone in their family.**
3. **Determine together the average age of your table. Everyone figure out how many months you have been alive. Add them up and divide by the number of people at the table.** Allow time for groups to do the calculations. **What is your table's average age?** This is a good team builder, since everyone participates in a non-threatening way. It also allows the leader to determine, generally, if each grouping

is cross+generational. If any group varies from the average age significantly (or if any group meets the average age by everyone being the same age), try to switch people around.

4. **Discuss the following questions with the group at your table. Remember to listen to everyone and give everyone a chance to tell their story.**
  - **Who lives in your home?**
  - **Who do you see almost every day?**
  - **Who do you look forward to seeing every day?**
  - **Are there any animals you look forward to seeing every day?**
  - **Are there any natural sites you pass by daily?**
5. **Our story today is about creation. God created the earth, the land, sea, plants, animals, and humans. And God created us to be in relationship with each other. We will read about God’s creation today, and talk about what that means for how we are in relationship with each other and with the earth.**

# BIBLE NUTS & BOLTS (10 MINUTES)

## THE BIBLE AS STORY

Share your favorite Bible stories.

*You will need:*

- † Bibles
- † White board or mural paper
- † Markers

*During class:*

1. **What are some stories that you know are in the Bible? Let's make a list.**
2. Invite participants to share their ideas. Write these stories on the white board or mural paper.
3. **There are so many stories in the Bible, and we are going to learn about different ones each time we meet together. All of these stories may have different characters or take place at different times, but they all teach us about how to live with God and with each other. The Old Testament is the first part of the Bible, the section from before Jesus was born. These stories are about the beginning of the world and the people of God, the Israelites. Which of our favorite stories that we listed are stories from the Old Testament?** Mark or highlight these stories on the list.
4. **Other stories, that we will hear later this year, are stories about Jesus, the apostles, and the beginning of the Church. Those stories are in the New Testament. Which of our favorite stories are from the New Testament?** Mark or highlight these stories with a different color.
5. Give participants time to look in the table of contents and in the Bibles to find the Old and New Testaments.
6. **Today we are going to hear a story of God creating the first humans, which is also the first story that we will hear from the Old Testament.**

## MAKING CONNECTIONS (10 MINUTES)

### CREATION CARE

Called to be in relationship to all creation.

*You will need:*

- † Paper
- † Pens or pencils

*During class:*

1. **God did not just give the first humans the responsibility for caring for the garden. We, too, have been tasked with taking care of the Earth and of one another, starting in our own backyard.**
2. **As a group, go and take a walk around the outside grounds, and note any concerns that arise over the well-being of the animals, plants, land, or people that surround our church building. Come back in five minutes.** If the weather is inclement, ask them to think about and discuss potential concerns.
3. When the groups come back, have them share their list of the concerns that they noticed. **What can we do as a group, as individuals, or as families to help show our care for those things around us?**
4. **What have you noticed elsewhere or learned about that leads you to be concerned about animals, plants, the land, or waters?** [*Trash, pollution, certain animals are becoming endangered, etc.*]
5. Assess people's concern and interest. Connect people with similar interests and levels of passion. Encourage them to take action, and to report back to the class at a later time.

# LEARNING THE STORY (15 MINUTES)

## THE CREATION

Make a creation mural.

*You will need:*

- † Bibles
- † Mural paper
- † Markers or crayons

*During class:*

1. Give each small group a piece of mural paper.
2. Have each group read Genesis 2:4b-25 in their small groups. Allow them to choose whether to read it by taking turns or with one person reading to the group. Do not allow them to read silently, as that would leave out pre-readers.
3. Read the passage aloud a second time, and invite participants to imagine the scene described in verses 8-14. Have them draw what they imagine on the mural paper.
4. Have groups discuss:
  - **What trees and plants do you think could have been in this garden?**
  - **If we were all there, what jobs would we each have had in tending to the garden?**
4. Invite volunteers to act out some of the jobs in the garden. **How would tending the garden be easier and more fruitful if done with other people? What would be more difficult?**
5. **God gave the garden to the humans, but set a strict limit. What was that limit?**  
*[The humans were not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.]*
6. **Why did God create the animals and, eventually, the woman?** *[Because it is not good for the man to be alone, God set about to create for him a partner.]*
7. **Why does God prefer us to be in relationship and community? Is this easy or difficult for you?**

## LIVING THE STORY (5 MINUTES)

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### LITANY OF PRAISE

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Create a litany based on God's great creation.

*You will need:*

- † Paper
- † Pens or pencils

*During class:*

1. **God created the earth and planted a garden for the man to tend. God then created a partner for the man, creating livestock, birds, and wild animals, before creating the woman. For God's creative power and loving attention to our needs, we offer a prayer of praise. Let's create a prayer litany together to show our gratitude and joy for God's creation. A litany is a series of short prayers that each are met with a consistent response.**
2. Assign each group a category on which to create their petition: plants, rivers, livestock, birds, wild animals, human companionship, rules and limitations. Each group should compose in whatever way they would like: prose, poetry, lists, or even sung verse. Remind them to solicit, but not demand, response from each group member.
3. **Use this format to begin and end each petition: For (petition) we give you praise. All respond: Praise to the God of creation!**
4. When all groups are done composing, have everyone stand as they are able, and recite your litany as a group. Consider planning to include this in worship if you are meeting before worship.

## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

### NAME THAT CREATION (10 MINUTES)

Play a game to complete categories.

*You will need:*

- † Paper
- † Pens or pencils
- † Index cards
- † Timer

*Before class:*

1. Write the following titles on index cards: Livestock, Birds, Wild Animals, Rivers, and Trees.

*During class:*

1. **God gave the care of the earth, plants, and animals over to humans. How many different things do you think that was? I will draw a card, and read the category listed on that card, and each group has one minute to come up with as many different members of that category as they possibly can.**
2. **Designate one person as the recorder. That person will write down all of your answers. You need to think quickly and write quickly, but make sure everyone gets a chance to be heard. Do not shout over each other; listen well.**
3. **The group that has the most answers in a category gets one point for that category. The group with the most points wins.**

## TOGETHER OR ALONE? (10 MINUTES)

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Visualize activities alone or in groups.

*You will need:*

- † Large pieces of paper
- † Marker
- † Masking tape

*Before class:*

1. Write the word “Together” on one piece of paper, and the word “Alone” on a second piece of paper.
2. Run a line of masking tape down the center of the room. On one side, lay or hang the Together sign. On the other side, lay or hang the Alone sign.

*During class:*

1. **God gave the man a partner because it was not good for him to be alone. But that does not mean that we always need to be with someone else. Some of us enjoy being alone. And some things that we do are best done alone.**
2. **I am going to name an activity that many or most of us do regularly. If you prefer to do this activity together with someone else, move to the Together side. If you prefer to do the activity alone, move to the Alone side. There are no wrong answers; this is about our preferences.**
3. Suggested activities: Eating a meal, reading a book, working on a project or report, going on vacation, exercising, practicing music, traveling to work or school, going to worship.
4. **While we all have different levels of comfort with groups or with being alone, God created us as individuals who are meant to be in relationship. How can you build a relationship with someone you encounter this week?**

## SENDING THE STORY (5 MINUTES)

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If your congregation is using the “Living the Word: Sharing God’s Story @ Home” insert, remember to hand them out at this point in the lesson.

### PRAYER

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Encourage participants to hold hands, if they would like, with those in their group, or in a large circle if the entire group is small enough. Begin and end the prayer, but leave enough silence in the middle for people to participate.

**Loving God, thank you for the amazing glory of your creation. Today we especially thank you for...** *(invite participants to add their prayers here)*. **Thank you for land, water, plants, animals, and for each other. Help us to each recognize the value of our relationships, and to see your work in the world. In your amazing name we pray. Amen.**