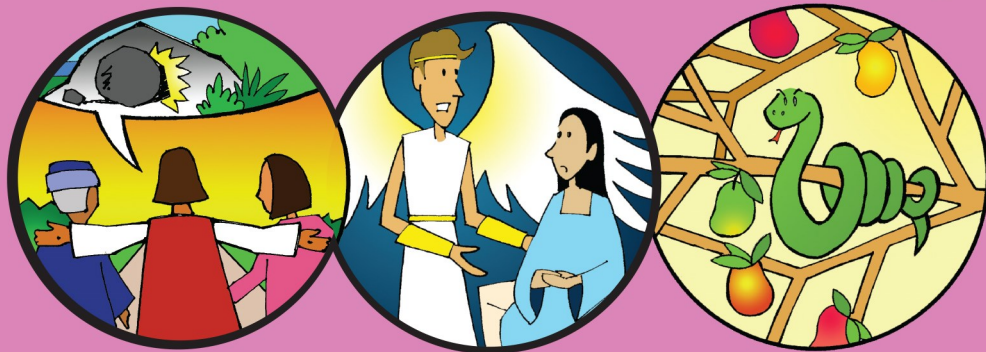


YOUTH

**SAMPLE
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LIVING THE WORD

Narrative Lectionary



Youth

Leader's Guide

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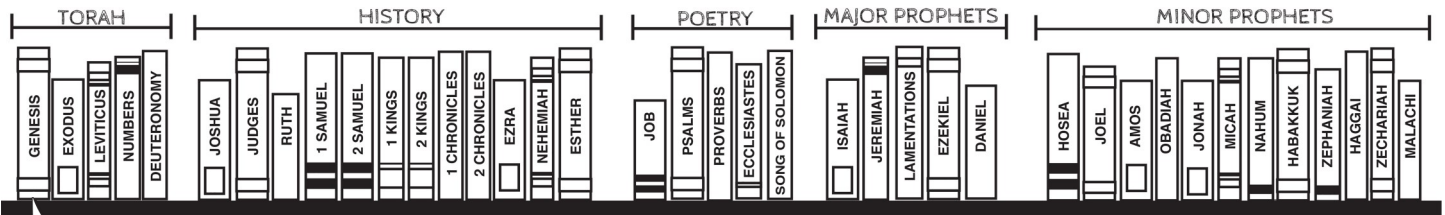
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OLD TESTAMENT



GENESIS

God Creates Humans

Genesis 2:4b-25

Today is the start of a new year exploring the story of the Narrative Lectionary—and we start at the beginning of that story: the creation.

Making Connections

With the creation of the first two humans, God forms the first community. God gives them a purpose—to care for the earth—and provides everything they need to do so. In response, they love God and each other. This is the first glimpse we see in the Bible of the world as God wills it, the kingdom of God.

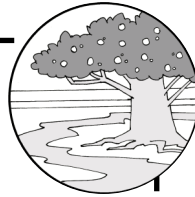
Story Summary

God Creates Humans

Today begins the Narrative Lectionary year. We 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, 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. 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.

Lesson @ A Glance

#2-1: God Creates Humans
Genesis 2:4b-25



The Point: We are created to be partners in God's work.

Making Connections: God Creates Family

Spiritual Practice Emphasis: Prayer

Bible Nuts & Bolts: Brief History of the Hebrew Bible

The Point

We are created to be partners in God's work. The first woman and man were created to be partners so that they could work together with a single purpose to glorify God. We are created for relationship, too, including one where we serve God by loving others.

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

Bible Nuts & Bolts: Brief History of the Hebrew Bible

The Hebrew Bible, or Old Testament, was written over a period of nearly one thousand years. Many of the stories of the Hebrew Bible were passed down orally from one generation to the next. Today's story is out of Genesis, the first book in the Hebrew Bible. Genesis and the four books that follow it are part of the first section of the Hebrew Bible called the Torah. According to tradition, Moses wrote the Torah. It is more likely that these books were put together from various earlier sources around 600 BCE. The rest of the Hebrew Bible is divided in the Jewish traditions into the Prophets

and the Writings. In Christian Bibles, the Prophets section is usually divided further into History, Wisdom Literature, Major and Minor Prophets.

For Your Reflection:

When have you felt alone? What was that experience like for you?

How might the youth feel alone within their homes, schools, and communities?

What words of comfort does this text bring to people who feel alone that you might use to encourage the youth?

Spiritual Practice: Prayer

Take a walk outside. As you walk, notice the beauty of God's creation. Thank God for creating the world, and for creating you.

Overview, Objectives, and Materials You'll Need

Core Elements

+Into the Story

5 min.

> None

I Am a...

Introduce the youth by sharing favorite animals.

+Learning the Story

15 min.

- > Bibles
- > Pens or pencils
- > Optional: printed copies of the Bible text

Community

Consider our part in the community God created.

+Living the Story

15 min.

> None

Not Alone

Discuss what it means to be in a community with all creation.

+Sending the Story

5 min.

> Story • Home

Short on time?
 Items marked +
 can be adjusted to be done with
 what you probably already
 have in your pocket or
 classroom.

Extending the Learning:

<p>Hands On In the Garden <i>Interpret life in the Garden of Eden.</i></p>	15 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Mural paper > Glue sticks > Scissors > Magazines > Markers or colored pencils > Optional: old photos
<p>Mixed Media Creation Scavenger Hunt <i>Take pictures to complete a scavenger hunt.</i></p>	20 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Activity Sheet #2-1.A > Cameras > Optional: projection
<p>The Competitive Edge Creationary <i>Play a unique twist on a popular game.</i></p>	15 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Play dough
<p>+Simply Serving Care for Creation <i>Plan a project to care for God's creation.</i></p>	10 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Paper > Pens or pencils
<p>+Worship Connection Our Worship <i>Encourage the community through prayer or liturgy.</i></p>	10 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Paper > Pens or pencils > Optional: worship books or bulletins
<p>+Discussion Guide God Creates Humans <i>Discuss today's story.</i></p>	15 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Youth Discussion Guide

Into the Story:

I Am a... (5 minutes)

Introduce the youth by sharing favorite animals.

DURING CLASS:

1. Invite the youth to sit in a circle. If you have a large class with smaller groups, invite youth to sit in a circle with their group.
2. **Welcome! Today we are going to begin a journey through the Bible together. Let's start by introducing ourselves to each other.**
3. Ask the youth to think of their favorite animal. Then, ask them to create a hand gesture or movement that represents their animal.
4. Start by introducing yourself, and sharing your gesture. Then, invite the person to your right to share their name and gesture. After that person shares their name and gesture, they must repeat your name and gesture to the group.
5. Then, the next person to the right shares their name and gesture. After sharing their name and gesture, they must repeat the names and gestures of both you and the person next to you.
6. Continue around the circle to the right. When it is their turn, each person must first share their name and gesture, then the name and gestures of everyone who has gone before them.
7. Once this returns to you, end by sharing the names and gestures of everyone in the group.

Supplies:

> Nothing

Learning the Story:

Community (15 minutes)

Consider our part in the community God created.

BEFORE CLASS

1. For youth to get the most out of this lesson and become comfortable using their Bibles, it is recommended that youth have personal Bibles to mark in for this activity. If this is not possible for one or more youth, please provide printed copies of the day's Bible text.
2. If weather permits, complete this lesson outside in the beauty of God's creation. Find a spot where the youth can focus on the story. If you complete this activity outdoors, encourage the youth to find pieces of nature to stick in their Bibles, as appropriate (i.e. leaves, small flowers, sticks, etc.).

Supplies:

- > Bibles
- > Pens or pencils
- > Optional: printed copies of the Bible text

DURING CLASS:

1. **Today we are going to read a story from the Book of Genesis. Let's read this story together!**
2. Invite the youth to open their Bibles to Genesis 2:4b-25. Begin by reading verses 4 through 9 aloud.
3. **How does God create the first human?** *[By forming him from the dust.]* **Where does God place humankind to live?** *[In the Garden of Eden.]*
4. Read verses 10 through 17. **Why do you think God created humans to live in the Garden of Eden?**
5. Read verses 18 through 25. **Why does God create another human?** *[So the first human would not be alone, so he would have a partner, etc.]*
6. **As you read the story, what are some words, phrases, or images that remind you of community and why God created us to live together?**
7. Hand out pencils or pens.
8. **The story of creation reminds us that God created us to live in community with nature and with each other. As humans, we were not created to be alone! In your Bible, write or sketch some words, phrases, or images from the story that remind you of what it means to be in community with others.**
9. Allow time for the youth to write and draw. If you are outdoors, invite them to find a symbol of nature (a leaf, flower, twig, etc.) to place in their Bible by the creation story.

Living the Story:

Not Alone (15 minutes)

Discuss what it means to be in a community with all creation.

DURING CLASS:

1. Take a walk outside. If you are unable to go outside, go to a window and look out as you have this discussion, or invite youth to imagine their favorite outdoor location.
2. **As we walk, notice the beauty of God's creation. Say a prayer to thank God for creating the world, and for creating you.**
 - **How does being in community with others remind us that we are never alone?**
 - **What are some ways in which we can live in community with creation? How might living in community with creation affect how we live in community with other people?**
 - **In what ways does worship remind us that we are in community with God and with other people?**
 - **How can we pray for creation and others in our community?**
3. Say a prayer together thanking God for creating community.

Supplies:

› Nothing

Hands On:

In the Garden (15 minutes)

Interpret life in the Garden of Eden.

BEFORE CLASS:

1. Collect magazines to use in this activity. As an option you can also provide old photographs.
2. Lay out a large banner of mural paper in a space where everyone can work comfortably. If you have a large class, break up into small groups and lay out mural paper for each group.
3. Arrange for your class's mural to be posted somewhere in your church.

Supplies:

- > Mural paper
- > Glue sticks
- > Scissors
- > Magazines
- > Markers or colored pencils
- > Optional: old photos

DURING CLASS:

1. **What are some words you would use to describe the Garden of Eden?** [*Beautiful, garden, growing, lush, colorful, etc.*]
2. **The Garden of Eden was more than just a beautiful place—it was also a perfect world. It was a place without sin and suffering. Think for a moment about what that place might look like. What are some words you would use to describe this place?** [*Happy, peaceful, just, inclusive, special, etc.*]
3. Invite the youth to look through the magazines and photos and find images of what this garden might look like and glue them to the mural paper. Provide markers or colored pencils for students to write or draw, if they would feel more comfortable doing so.
4. Upon completing the activity, work together to hang the group's mural in the church for all to see.

Mixed Media:

Creation Scavenger Hunt (20 minutes)

Take pictures to complete a scavenger hunt.

BEFORE CLASS:

1. Make one copy of Activity Sheet #2-1.A for every three to four youth.

Supplies

- > Activity Sheet #2-1.A
- > Cameras
- > Optional: projection

DURING CLASS:

1. Split the youth into small groups of three or four each. Give each group a copy of Activity Sheet #2-1.A.
2. Invite groups to go around the building and complete the scavenger hunt. For each word or phrase listed on the Activity Sheet, the group should take a photo that symbolizes it. Invite the youth to explore the classroom space as well as other rooms in the church where they might find creative responses to the words.
3. Encourage the youth to get creative as they take photos. Invite them to think of out-of-the-box images or symbols to photograph during the hunt, and to use different rooms and spaces. Before starting, set any “off limits” areas where youth should not go (i.e. offices, storage closets, etc.). If weather and resources allow, encourage students to look for photo opportunities outdoors, too.
4. Allow ten minutes to complete the scavenger hunt.
5. Invite groups to come back together and share their photos.

The Competitive Edge:

Creationary (15 minutes)

Play a unique twist on a popular game.

DURING CLASS:

1. **In today's story, God creates the world—including animals. Let's play a game where we are creators, too.**
2. Split your group into two teams. Provide each team with some play dough.
3. Invite one person from each team forward with some play dough. Quietly, without the rest of us hearing, tell these two people an animal to create with the dough.
4. At your signal, the creators must use the dough to make the animal, while their teammates attempt to guess what the animal is. The first team to guess correctly earns a point.
5. Invite another person from each team to come forward to be the creator, playing until everyone has played several rounds or until you run out of time.
6. The winning team is the team with the most points.
7. **What did it feel like creating the animals out of the play dough? What words would you use to describe the experience?** [*Easy, hard, difficult, challenging, fun, special, etc.*]

Supplies:

› Play dough

Simply Serving:

Care for Creation (10 minutes)

Plan a project to care for God's creation.

BEFORE CLASS:

1. Identify examples of service projects the group can do to help care for creation. Some ideas might include electronics recycling drives, planning campaigns to advocate for stewardship and conservation of resources, letter-writing on environmental issues, or planning a church- or community-wide creation care challenge.

Supplies

- › Paper
- › Pens or pencils

DURING CLASS:

1. **God has created us to be in community and care for everything that God has created. Let's plan a project we can do as a group to help care for creation.**
2. Brainstorm projects the group can complete to care for creation. Write these ideas on a sheet of paper.
3. As a group, pick one of these ideas to implement as a service project. Make plans to complete the project. Some questions to consider while planning the project are:
 - **When will this project take place?**
 - **Who will we invite to be involved?**
 - **How can we get the larger church community involved?**
 - **How long will this project last?**
 - **How will we publicize it?**
4. Arrange for the group to complete their service project.

Worship Connection:

Our Worship (10 minutes)

Encourage the community through prayer or liturgy.

BEFORE CLASS:

1. Optional: collect worship books or bulletins from your church to use for this activity.

DURING CLASS:

1. **When we come together to worship in church, we are worshipping as a community. The ways in which we worship show what it means to live in communion with God and with one another.**
2. Invite the youth to look through worship books and bulletins to find what portions of the worship service that have themes and ideas of community tied to them.
3. After finding these examples, create a prayer or liturgy that celebrates and illustrates the church community. Write it down.
4. Arrange for the prayers or liturgies to be used in a worship service at your church.

Supplies

- > Paper
- > Pens or pencils
- > Optional: worship books or bulletins

Sending the Story (5 minutes)

Review

- In what order were things created in our Genesis 2 reading?
- When God created humanity, what purpose did God have for humans?

Prayer

Join hands or stand near each other in a circle. **God created us to be in relationship with God and with others. We are created to be partners in God's work. Go forth and live for God. Amen.**

Squeeze hands gently and release.

Remember to send “The Story @ Home” take home sheet with students before dismissing them.



God Creates Humans

Unit 1: God Creates Family

Youth Discussion Guide

If you break into small groups (or are a small group), use the following questions to discuss the day's Bible passage and how it relates to your lives. Make a copy of this sheet for each member of the group and provide pencils or pens. Encourage each other to take a moment to write your response in words or doodles before discussing out loud.

Start your time by going around your group and asking each member (adults included) to share a high point and a low point from the past week.

Opening Prayer

Guide our discussion as we consider your creation of humans and community. Amen.

Understand

- ❓ Take a moment to read Genesis 1:1–2:4a, the passage before today's lesson. Both are stories of God creating the world. How are they different? How are they similar?

Wrestle

- ❓ What might be the significance of God making the first human out of dust and breath and the second out of a rib?
- ❓ Why do we feel the need to hide when we feel shame?

Share

- ❓ Write or draw what family or community means to you.

Apply

- ❓ During the coming week, observe all of God's creation—nature and humans—and thank God for the part each plays in your life.

Creation Scavenger Hunt

Take pictures to complete a scavenger hunt.

Earth	Creation	Formed first human from the dust	Breath of life
Eden	Tree of the knowledge of good and evil	Out of the ground	Animals
Living creatures	Deep sleep	Partners	Generations



God Creates Humans

Unit 1: God Creates Family

THIS WEEK

In a second creation story, God creates the first human from dust and God's own breath. To create a suitable partner, God forms the second human out of the first, creating the first family and community (Genesis 1:1-2:4a).

The Point

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

Story Summary

Today begins the Narrative Lectionary year. We 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, 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. 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.

Bible Nuts & Bolts:

Brief History of the Hebrew Bible

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Practice: Prayer

Take a walk outside. As you walk, notice the beauty of God's creation. Thank God for creating the world, and for creating you.

NEXT WEEK

God promises that the elderly Sarah and Abraham will have a son, to which Sarah laughs in disbelief. God's promise comes true, and with joyous laughter they name their child Isaac (Genesis 18:1-15; 21:1-7).

Going Deeper

As you hear and study these stories each week, consider what God has to say to you and your family. What is God's message to us? Consider the following basic pattern as a way of forming family devotions:

- ✦ Light a candle to help you focus this time as "God time." Pray a simple prayer together.
- ✦ Take a moment to check in with each other; what are each person's "highs" and "lows" today?
- ✦ Read aloud from the Daily Bible Readings from below. Discuss the questions following each.
- ✦ End with a blessing, by simply tracing a cross on each other's forehead. The Lord's Prayer is a good way to end your devotion time. If you used a candle, extinguish it as a sign of the end of the devotions.

Note: This is only a suggested pattern. It will vary with your household's context and patterns. What works best for you? First thing in the morning? Over breakfast? Bed time? Be creative and flexible with how you practice and keep your devotions!

Daily Bible Readings

Sunday – Read Genesis 2:4b-25

God creates humans.

- Do you enjoy being alone for a long time? Why or why not?
- How can you partner with others to serve God?

Monday – Read Genesis 3:1-21

Humans sin by disobeying God.

- Why did Eve and Adam do what they were told not to do even when God had given them so much?
- What temptations do you struggle with?

Tuesday – Read Genesis 11:27-32

Abram and Sarai are introduced.

- How many children did Abram and Sarai have?
- Tell the story of your family the way these verses introduce Abram.

Wednesday – Read Genesis 12:1-9

God makes a promise to Abram.

- What promise did God make to Abram?
- What would it take for you to follow the kind of instructions Abram was given?

Thursday – Read Genesis 14:14-20

Abram leads a battle that results in a blessing.

- Why did Abram lead men in an attack?
- In what peaceful ways do you defend your family?

Friday – Read Genesis 17:1-8

Abram becomes Abraham. Sarai becomes Sarah.

- What does your name mean?
- In what ways has the covenant God made with Abraham been fulfilled?

Saturday – Read Genesis 17:15-22

Abraham and Sarah are promised a son.

- What do you not ask God to do because you think it is impossible?
- In what ways has God blessed you?