

Growing in God's Love

A Story Bible Curriculum

At-Home Kit Guide

Dear Family of First Presbyterian Church,

Here is your at-home kit! This kit is designed to engage your family in exploring this unit on **Creation**, with 3 stories that have questions and activities for you to do together.

There are three activities to do, called The Story, Around the Table, and Family Activity. You can do these activities at your pace, and you don't have to do everything all in the same day or in one sitting. Read the at-home kit instructions sheet to see what to do for the **Creation** unit.

- 🌿 **The Story**—This is the easy part! Read or listen to one of the stories from *Growing in God's Love: A Story Bible* together as a family. You can find a video of Pastor Rachel recording the story each week in the Virtual Sunday School Classroom. You will see a whiteboard with the word "Creation" written on it, and when you click the word "Creation" you will be taken to a Youtube video with the reading. The video will change each week with each story. There will also be some questions asked for your child to consider that you can talk about together.
- 🌿 **Around the Table**—This section contains wondering questions that everyone can discuss about the story. Wondering questions have no right or wrong answers. They are meant to evoke imagination and further discussion as everyone thinks about the story and wrestles with their place in it. A great time to ask these questions is during a family meal or at another time when your family can gather together.
- 🌿 **Family Activity**—There are several suggestions for activities you can do together as a family. Choose one that works best for your family. Some activities require supplies found in this kit or things you may have at home. If you are missing something, feel free to substitute or adapt the activity. There are book and/or video suggestions that may be included in a session. You can borrow a book if it is in your local library, purchase a book, or watch a read-aloud version online. Internet links are provided in the at-home kit instructions.

We hope this helps your family learn about the stories of the Bible and guides you through talking about faith in your home. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Rachel or a member of the Christian Education Committee.

Blessings,
Pastor Rachel
First Presbyterian Church

At-Home Kit Instructions

○ In this kit, you will find:

- ✦ At-home kit letter to families
- ✦ Instructions on how your family can listen to the stories by clicking on the whiteboard in the Virtual Sunday School Classroom. You can find the classroom in the weekly Banner newsletter or on the church website at www.firstpresconcord.org.
- ✦ Supplies provided in the at-home kit and the story it will be used for:
 - 4 teaspoons of cream of tartar (How God Made Everything)
 - Straws (How God Made Everything)
 - Red construction paper (When the World Started Over Again)
 - Small stack of index cards (When the World Started Over Again)
- ✦ Supplies not included in the at-home kit:
 - Flour (How God Made Everything)
 - Water (How God Made Everything)
 - Measuring spoons (How God Made Everything)
 - Storage container or bag for modeling dough (How God Made Everything)
 - Scissors (We Were All Farmers Once, When the World Started Over Again)
 - Markers, crayons, or colored pencils (We Were All Farmers Once, When the World Started Over Again)

○ The Story

For the next three weeks we will read from the **Creation** unit:

- ✦ How God Made Everything (Genesis 1:1–2:4a)- **September 20**
- ✦ We Were All Farmers Once (Genesis 2:4b–22)- **September 27**
- ✦ When the World Started Over Again (Genesis 6–9)- **October 4**

In these stories we connect with essential themes of faith:

- God’s act of creating the world and all that is in it.
- God’s expectation of humans to care for the earth—all creation and the land, water, and air that supports our life’s breath.
- Experiences of loss, death, and starting over—remembering that God is always near, comforting and supporting us through the love of those around us, especially our families, our friends, and our faith communities.

- The following pages will include the “Around the Table” conversation questions and the options for family activities. Feel free to do as few or as many activities as you choose. The activities will help your child and family engage through creativity, storytelling, spiritual practices, and service and mission opportunities.

At-Home Kit Instructions

How God Made Everything (Genesis 1:1–2:4a)- September 20

○ Around the Table

Engage in conversation using the following questions:

🌿 **How God Made Everything**

- What do you think it was like before there was nothing?
- What do you think the writer of this story of creation wanted us to know?
- What is your favorite part of creation?
- How have we taken care of the world?
- How could we do a better job caring for the world?

○ Family Activity: Choose one or more activities to do together as a family.

🌿 **How God Made Everything**

- *“I Spy” Prayer*
 - From your window, porch, or backyard or at a local park, turn the game I Spy into a prayer. One person says, “I spy with my little eye, something that is (*an adjective describing something in nature*). All the others guess. When the correct answer is said, everyone should respond, “Thank you, God, for (*that item in nature*)!”
- *Pausing and Praying*
 - At a meal this week, take turns saying thank-you to God for something you’ve noticed in God’s creation.
 - As you close down the day, recall or remember something in the world you’ve seen that needs to be more beautiful, something in God’s creation that we have not taken care of. Ask God for help in caring for this part of God’s creation and our world so that it can become beautiful again.
- *Exploring Books*
 - Watch the video of “When God Made the World” by Matthew Paul Turner in our virtual Sunday School classroom.
 - *When God Made Light* by Matthew Paul Turner is a picture book that celebrates the light of creation and the light within each of us. Read it aloud or YouTube video “When God Made Light” ([bit .ly/WhenGodMadeLight](https://bit.ly/WhenGodMadeLight), 4:21). Play together with shadow and light.
 - *Big Momma Makes the World* by Phyllis Root is a contemporary retelling of the creation story. Read it aloud or watch the YouTube video “Big Momma Makes the World” (bit.ly/BigMommaBook, 7:54).
- *Make homemade modeling dough*
 - Make homemade modeling dough using the recipe below and then sculpt the different animals mentioned in the creation story. Wonder together what animals you’d like to create: ones you know or a creature of your imagination.
 1. Combine 2 cups all-purpose flour, 3/4 cup salt, and 4 teaspoons cream of tartar in a bowl.
 2. In a medium pot, over medium heat, combine 2 cups water, 2 tablespoons of vegetable oil, and food coloring.
 3. Stir in dry ingredients. Stir continually until combined.
 4. Remove from pot, cool slightly, then knead. Store in an airtight container.

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- *Taking Care of the Earth*
 - Watch the YouTube video “Taking Care of Earth—Caring for the Environment—Made by Red Cat Reading” (bit.ly/TakingCareVideo, 5:29). This video was designed to help children read along with it, but because it moves a bit slower and highlights each word, children have a chance to take in the information and notice the pictures and their captions.
- *Enjoying Walks*
 - Take a walk in your neighborhood or a nearby park. Take a bag and gloves with you, and as you walk, pick up paper or cans or bottles, any trash that you see. When we help to keep the world beautiful, we remember God’s beautiful creation.
- *Wind Art*
 - The word *wind* in the Bible is the same word for *breath*, so the verse says that creation began as God breathed over the waters. Suggest that just like God’s breath blew across the water, our breath can create too. Cover tables with newspaper or plastic tablecloths. Place a variety of colors of watered-down paints in cups on the table.
 - Demonstrate how to pick up the paint from the cup by putting the straw in the paint and covering the top end of the straw with your finger to hold the paint in the straw. Move the straw to the paper and release the paint on the paper. Show them how to blow gently into the straw in different directions and watch the paint move around on the paper. Create your own breath paintings.

At-Home Kit Instructions

We Were All Farmers Once (Genesis 2:4b–22)- September 27

○ Around the Table

Engage in conversation using the following questions:

🌿 **We Were All Farmers Once**

- What words did you hear repeated in this story?
- How is this writer’s story about creation different from the first story of creation?
- Why did God create humans?
- What are some ways we can be good to the soil?
- If we could see God’s breath today blowing around us, what do you think would happen?
- What have we learned about farming since this story of creation was written?
- What can we do to make sure everyone has access to the food that they need to survive?

○ Family Activity: Choose one or more activities to do together as a family.

🌿 **We Were All Farmers Once**

- *Thank-You and Please Help Prayers*
 - Place two different-colored stacks of note cards or sticky notes and a pencil or pen on a table in your home. Invite people to write or draw something in creation that they have noticed and are thankful for on one color of notes or something that they have noticed that they are concerned about on the other color of notes. Assist with writing as needed. If at home, do this each day. Place the note cards in a bowl or the sticky notes on a wall. At home, offer these prayers to God at a meal that you share together each day.
- *Enough Food for Everyone*
 - As a family, talk about how you could make a commitment to supporting the work of Bread for the World. Learn more about this organization that is committed to fighting hunger locally and throughout the world. Go to www.bread.org.
 - Learn about how your church is working to fight hunger and share food. Follow the Food and Faith blog at www.presbyterianmission.org/food-faith or check your denomination’s website for its actions regarding hunger.
- *Choose a storybook to read. Here are a few your family might enjoy:*
 - *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind*, by William Kamkwamba can be read aloud, or you can watch the YouTube video “The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind” (bit.ly/HarnessedTheWindBook, 6:31). YouTube has a number of interesting videos about William Kamkwamba and his work in Malawi.
 - *Mama Panya’s Pancakes: A Village Tale from Kenya* by Mary and Rich Chamberlin can be read aloud, or you can watch the YouTube video “Little Larks 3—Service—Mama Panya’s Pancakes” (bit.ly/MamaPanyasPancakesBook, 6:00).
 - *Stone Soup* by Jon J. Muth can be read aloud, or you can watch the YouTube video “Stone Soup” (bit.ly/StoneSoupByMuth, 6:47)
 - *Farmer Will Allen and the Growing Table* by Jacqueline Briggs Martin can be read aloud, or you can watch the YouTube video “Farmer Will Allen and the Growing Table” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XpwK4tCqhYY>, 8:58).

At-Home Kit Instructions

- *Watch one or more of these YouTube videos about farming*
 - Harvesting Wheat—from ‘ bee bright—Out and About on the Farm—Incredible Crops! (bit.ly/HarvestingWheat, 9:40)
 - “Planting & Harvesting Vegetable Crops Video” (bit.ly/VegetableCrops, 2:34)
 - “A Year on Our Farm” (bit.ly/AYearOnOurFarm, 5:42)
- *Make Connections*
 - Visit a local farmer’s market and select foods that you would like to use to make a meal together. When you are there, talk with the farmers about how they grow their food.
 - Be aware of the soil that is around you. If you have flower beds at your house or around your church, take a day as a family or congregation and plant flowers, vegetables, or herbs. If you have a small patio, you could plant in pots.
- *Volunteering and Sharing*
 - Volunteer to help with sharing food and plants from the dark rich soil of God’s creation. What organizations are there in your community where you could volunteer to help with sharing food with those in need, such as Second Harvest (check for local food bank or www.feedingamerica.org/find-your-local-foodbank) or the Society of Saint Andrew (www.endhunger.org).
 - Who do you know in your church or community who might enjoy receiving a loaf of bread you have baked, a small bunch of flowers from your garden, or a small plant you have grown from seed?
- *Paint with Mud*
 - Cover a table in newspaper or plastic tablecloths and put on paint shirts. Gather different colors of dirt. Scoop the different types of dirt in different cups, and add water until the dirt forms a thick soupy consistency. They may add a few drops of food coloring, if they desire, and mix it in to the mud. Finger-paint with their mud and when finished, title them, “We Are a Part of the Earth.”
- *Making Soup*
 - Wonder together where different vegetables are grown. You may know that some states grow a certain kind of crop and some vegetables come from far away due to growing seasons. Consider together how vegetables get from the place they were grown to your room today. Count up how many people and places may have had a hand in raising those vegetables.
 - Make a simple vegetable soup together while thinking about the food we eat and giving thanks for those who grow it and get it to us. Use a vegetable soup stock as your base. Explain that even though it is in a container, it, too, contains vegetables from the earth. Show the vegetables and herbs that you have brought to make the soup. Comment that though some may be in cans (tomatoes and beans), frozen (peas and corn), or dried (herbs), they all were grown by farmers for our benefit.
 - Determine what your child can do: peel and cut carrots, chop onion and garlic; measure frozen vegetables; add ingredients; add seasonings; stir the soup; set the table; and so forth. Use the recipe on the next page to make the soup.
 - Serve and enjoy, giving thanks for the goodness of the earth and the farmers who provide for us.

At-Home Kit Instructions

Simple Vegetable Soup

Makes about 7 cups.

Takes about 15–20 minutes

Supplies:

Large soup pot with lid

Large microwave-safe bowl

Large spoon

Ladle

Knives

Cutting board

Measuring cups and spoons

Stove top

Small bowls or cups

Spoons

Ingredients: (feel free to add or substitute vegetables)

4 cups low or no-sodium vegetable broth

1 (28 oz.) can petite diced tomatoes

1 Tbsp olive oil

1 cup sliced carrots

1 cup trimmed and chopped (about 1") green beans (or use frozen)

1 small onion

1 clove garlic

½ tsp salt

¼ tsp black pepper

1 (15.5 oz) can white kidney (cannellini) beans

1 cup frozen peas

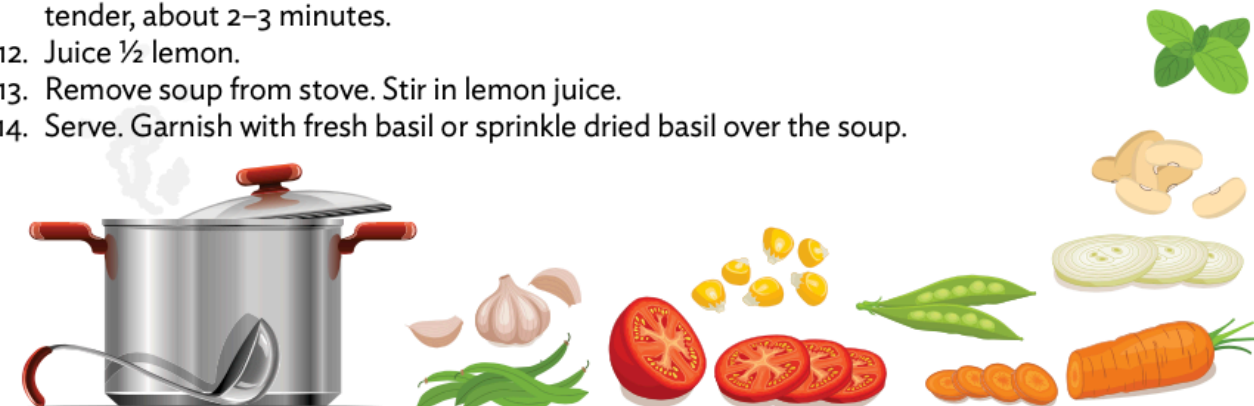
1 cup frozen corn

½ lemon

Fresh or dried basil

Directions:

1. Pour the vegetable broth and diced tomatoes into the microwave-safe bowl and cook on high for 6 minutes.
2. While the broth and tomatoes are cooking, add oil to a large soup pot and place over medium heat. Add the carrots. Stir and cover.
3. Add the green beans. Stir and cover.
4. Peel and chop the onion. Add to the pot. Stir and cover.
5. Peel and mince the garlic. Add to the pot. Stir and cover.
6. Add salt and pepper. Stir and cover.
7. Drain the white kidney beans. Add to the pot.
8. Add the peas.
9. Add the corn. Stir and cover.
10. Carefully add the hot broth and tomato mixture. Stir and cover. Increase the heat to high.
11. Cook to boil. Reduce heat to simmer. Stir occasionally until the carrots and green beans are tender, about 2–3 minutes.
12. Juice ½ lemon.
13. Remove soup from stove. Stir in lemon juice.
14. Serve. Garnish with fresh basil or sprinkle dried basil over the soup.



At-Home Kit Instructions

When the World Started Over Again (Genesis 6–9)- **October 4**

○ Around the Table

Engage in conversation using the following questions:

🌿 **When the World Started Over Again**

- What do you want to remember about this story?
- What did God do?
- Why do you think the earth almost ended?
- What do you think it was like on the ark? For the people? For the animals?
- What do you think people did differently after the flood was over?
- Why do you think God made the promise God made?
- How does this kind of story help us?
- Where do you think God is keeping promises today?
- Where do you find comfort in this story?

○ Family Activity: Choose one or more activities to do together as a family.

🌿 **When the World Started Over Again**

- *Making Promise Hearts*
 - God reminded Noah and his family that they would be safe and that God would always be with them to keep them safe. Then God put a rainbow in the sky to remind them of this promise. When we make a promise, we are saying that we remember. Cut hearts out of construction paper or printer paper. Make sure the hearts are large enough to be written on. Keep them in a bowl on your dining room table. Invite people to think about a promise that they would like to make, write it on the heart, and leave in the bowl.
- *Choose a storybook to read*
 - *Noah's Wife: The Story of Naamah* by Sandy Eisenberg Sasso (Jewish Lights, 2002) tells the story from the point of view of Naamah, who has her own way of dealing with the situation and living with hope. She collects seeds in her apron and eventually replants the earth. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sflf-zifD18>)
 - *Hope Springs* by Eric Walters (Tundra Books, 2014) tells the story of a young boy living in Kenya without a safe source for clean water. In the face of fear and scarcity, Boniface chooses to live with generosity.
 - *The Dove* by Dianne Stewart (Greenwillow, 1993) tells the story of a girl and her grandmother and their creative response to the flood that destroyed the crops on their farm in South Africa.
- *Blessing Cards*
 - Even though there may not be a big flood that turns life upside down (and even when there is!), people experience many things that feel like the end of the world. Suggest that they need to hear the hope and comfort found in this story. Make cards to hand out to people reminding them of God's promise.
 - Brainstorm together some phrases from this story that would give people hope and comfort, such as: "God's promises are for you." "Remember the rainbow promise." "God will not leave you."

At-Home Kit Instructions

- Using the index cards, draw rainbows on one side with markers, crayons, or colored pencils. On the other side of the card, write one of the phrases. Make several cards to give to people at church.
- Drop off the cards in neighborhood mailboxes or ship to other church members' homes
- *Painting with Watercolors*
 - Play the video of the story "When the World Started Over Again" while painting and listening to the story. Invite them to paint the scene that they hear, or use the prompt below.
 - Imagine together taking everything you would need for a long trip in a car or a boat. What would you take?
- *Service: In Times of Disaster*
 - Consider making some of the Gift from the Heart kits as a family, group of families, or congregation. Find information at the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance site. Go to www.presbyterianmission.org/pda and click on "Act," then "Assemble Kits." Choose cleanup buckets, hygiene kits, or school kits to assemble.
- *Wonder Walk*
 - Go on a walk in your neighborhood or in a park and wonder together where they will see God's promises this week. Encourage them to look for rainbows, either ones up in the sky or others that they may see throughout the week, to remind them that God is with them always. Look around for signs of God's goodness and faithfulness. When you see such a sign, give thanks to God for it together.