

Our Christian Education Program

We use exceptional resources from Seasons of the Spirit that can equip and empower our leaders to make a profound difference in the lives of children and youth by bringing faith to life.

The vision...

Seasons of the Spirit provides faith communities with resources that empower all ages to be transformed in Christ as they:

- explore meaning and mystery in the Bible
- celebrate in worship, sacraments, education, and service
- engage in ministries of love, justice, and witness
- live in inclusive communities of faith, shaped and led by the Holy Spirit.

(The full text of the *Theological and Educational Foundations Paper* is available on the *Seasons* website.)

Seasons of the Spirit...

- is an ecumenical **lectionary-based resource** (see reverse)
- follows the **seasons of the church year** (see reverse)
- integrates the ministries of Christian education, worship, and service
- offers ritual and resources that nurture the imaginative spirit
- is created by an international team of writers and editors through a community development process
- is used by faith communities around the world, from Australia to North America to the United Kingdom

Seasons of the Spirit is for everyone! Go online at www.seasonsonline.ca to access extra resources that support and enrich worship and learning.

- *Library*: Articles, *Ask the Rabbi* (background on Jewish traditions and practices), Clip Art, Living the Season at Home, Prayer and Poem Gallery, Virtual Resource Booklet (includes crafts, recipes, and patterns), and more...
- *Links*: websites referenced in the weekly materials to enhance the session resources
- *Spirit Sightings* and *Spirit Screenings*: weekly connections between the weekly lectionary passages and international current events or contemporary films
- *SeasonsFUSION BLOG*: share your experiences, tips, and ideas with the entire *Seasons* community

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What is the lectionary?

The *Revised Common Lectionary* (1992) is based on a three-year cycle of Bible readings, arranged to include foundational stories in a schedule following the cycle of the church year.

- four readings for each Sunday: two from the Hebrew Scriptures (one being a Psalm) and two from the New Testament (a gospel reading and a reading from an epistle/letter)
- each year focuses on one of the first three gospels: Year A – Matthew, Year B – Mark, and Year C – Luke

The *Seasons* resources are based on the “Semi-continuous stream” of readings. (See “One Lectionary—Two Streams” and “Being Led by the Lectionary” in the **EXPLORE SEASONS** section of the *Seasons* website.)

What are the seasons and colours of the church year?

The journey through the church year follows a path begun 1500 years ago, focusing on the life of Christ.

- **Season of Advent:** (4 weeks); exploring readings about the promised Messiah and God’s realm; purple or blue, symbolizing hope and anticipation
- **Season of Christmas:** (12 days); celebrating Jesus’ birth and the visit of the magi; white or gold, symbolizing light and gift
- **Season after the Epiphany:** (length varies); called “Ordinary Time”; exploring stories of call and Jesus’ ministry; green, symbolizing growth
- **Season of Lent:** (40 days, not counting Sundays); focusing on Jesus’ life and stories of covenant and prophecy; purple, symbolizing penitence; ends with Palm/Passion Sunday (colour: red) and Holy Week
- **Season of Easter:** (50 days); celebrating Christ’s resurrection and the witness of the disciples; white or gold, symbolizing joy and holiness; ends with Pentecost Sunday (colour: red), celebrating the birth of the church
- **Season after Pentecost:** (about half the year); also called “Ordinary time”; exploring stories of faith ancestors, Jesus’ teachings, and the witness of the early church; green, symbolizing growth and renewal
- **Season of Creation:** (four Sundays in September); uses its own set of readings which correspond to the three-year cycle of the *Revised Common Lectionary* and invite congregations to “celebrate Earth as a sacred planet filled with God’s vibrant presence” (from the *Season of Creation* charter); aqua, symbolizes the green-blue colour of planet Earth

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