

## 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](http://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, Nurturing Faith 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
- *Lection Connection*: 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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