



Children's Curriculum for Lent-Easter

Introduction to the Curriculum

Written by Rev. Anna Strickland

About the Curriculum

This engaging children's curriculum contains 8 weeks of lessons (for each Sunday in Lent through the Second Sunday of Easter) that follow Simon Peter's journey with Jesus. The lessons include a variety of ways for children (approximately ages 5–11) to connect to the *Wandering Heart* themes and gospel stories—through kinesthetic scripture retellings and further engagement with the theme through crafts, books, and games.

We have included the following elements in each weekly curriculum. You are welcome to adapt and order these elements to best suit your context—for use in Sunday School, worship, or take-home kits.

Scripture Retelling

We have included original retellings of the scripture stories (by Rev. Anna Strickland) with kinesthetic prompts for children to physically engage with the story as it's being told. These prompts could alternatively be incorporated into any translation of the scriptures you prefer. You might even use them in worship to involve the whole congregation in the scripture reading!

You might notice that we've changed Peter's name in some stories. To make Simon Peter's name (sometimes Simon, sometimes Peter, sometimes both) less confusing while still honoring the renaming story in Matthew 16, we've chosen to use the name "Simon Peter" for the first three weeks, followed by "Peter" thereafter, rather than sticking to the names that appear in the actual text.

Reflection

Use the included prompts to lead children in discussion. Questions about the text may emerge. Resist the temptation to answer children's questions simply and quickly. Instead, follow the example of Jesus who frequently answered questions with more questions. Ask, "What do *you* think?"

Prayer

Before closing in prayer, you might ask children if they have any prayer requests or if any of them would like to pray. Inviting children to pray helps them build their language of prayer and offers children's leaders a glimpse of what's weighing on their hearts and minds.

Extension Activities

These activities can be used to elongate the Sunday School time, set up "stations" in the children's area for further learning, extend the theme into childcare during worship, or send home as suggestions to reinforce the lesson throughout the week. Some activities require very little preparation or materials, while others require some preparation and/or materials that you may not have on hand. We suggest reading through the activities ahead of time to determine what materials and preparation you might need.

How to use this curriculum

Sunday School

A sample flow for your Sunday School time might be:

- Open in song, whether it's "Come Thou Fount," or another song fitting the theme.
- Tell the story and encourage children to act out the kinesthetic prompts as they arise.
- Follow the reflection prompts to discuss the scripture.
- Use any of the suggested extension activities to continue to explore the theme and fill the remaining time, then close with prayer.

Worship

For the children's moment, you might use the scripture retelling with kinesthetic prompts, encouraging the whole congregation to follow along. Then follow up with some of the reflection prompts and close in prayer. Alternatively, you could read the recommended story book under the "Extension Activities" section for each week.





About the Author

Rev. Anna Strickland

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Anna Strickland (*she/her*) looks for the Divine in the everyday like treasure in clay jars and first encountered God in the integration of her spiritual self and artistic self. She is a former teacher and college minister, a proud Texas Longhorn and graduate of Iliff School of Theology, a Baptist to the core ministering in ecumenical spaces, and a lover of chaos anchored by the belief that the Spirit is most active in the spaces between us.

A Sanctified Art LLC is a collective of artists in ministry who create resources for worshipping communities. The Sanctified Art team works collaboratively to bring scripture and theological themes to life through film, visual art, curriculum, coloring pages, liturgy, graphic designs, and more. Their mission is to empower churches with resources to inspire creativity in worship and beyond. Driven by the connective and prophetic power of art, they believe that art helps us connect our hearts with our hands, our faith with our lives, and our mess with our God.

Learn more about their work at sanctifiedart.org.

