

Letter to Families

Welcome to the *Season after Pentecost*, the longest season of the church year, which begins on June 7, the week after Pentecost, and will end on the Sunday before Advent. Traditionally this season is considered to be a time of learning and growth in the life of the church as we explore what it means to follow God faithfully day by day.

This season begins with a story about the creation of the world from the first two chapters of Genesis. The following three weeks the children will explore some of Jesus' teachings from the gospel of Matthew.

The rest of the season focuses on some foundational stories of our faith. From the book of Genesis the children will hear the stories of Isaac and Rebekah (chapter 24), of their sons Jacob and Esau (chapter 25 and 28), of Jacob and his wives Leah and Rachel (chapter 29), and of Jacob's son Joseph and his brothers (chapters 32 and 37). The season ends with two stories about Moses from chapters 1 and 3 of the book of Exodus.

We encourage you and your child to follow these stories at home as they unfold week by week, perhaps reading from a book of children's Bible stories (see some suggestions below). Sometimes the lectionary (a series of weekly scripture readings) will skip over several chapters of the story from one Sunday to the next, so it can be helpful for you to read those missing parts together.

One question that can be asked this season is, "What does it mean to live in God's way?" By sharing your experiences you can help your child learn what it means to follow God in her or his everyday life. Take time to discuss how you choose to follow God's ways at home, in the community, or at work. Talk about the experiences that encourage you. Also talk about the times you have found it difficult to live in God's ways, and where you find strength and hope to live faithfully. Share with them the places and times where you see signs of God's presence. Talk about those who have shown you what it means to live faithfully. Discussing these topics helps children know that your faith is important to you.

During this season we will pray weekly for your child. We hope that you and your child will also pray for us and for our group. May this Season after Pentecost be one of growth and discovery for you and your child.

Blessings,

Suggested children's Bibles for using at home: For young children, *Family Story Bible* or *The Lectionary Story Bible, Year A*. For older children, *Read, Wonder, Listen: Stories from the Bible for Young Readers*. Both are available from the publisher of *Seasons of the Spirit* at www.woodlakebooks.com. Also available is the book *A Creation Story* by Carolyn Pogue to help children explore the stories of creation in the book of Genesis. Other books from Wood Lake Publishing which can help children explore life and faith issues: *Is That Story True* and *Jesse's Surprise Gift* by Laura Alary and *The Alligator in Naomi's Pillow* by David Giuliano.

