

## SUNDAY SCHOOL CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

Grades K–8th | Imprimatur: + *William Bower, SSC, Episcopus, Diocese of the Eastern United States, Anglican Catholic Church*

### **An Anglican Approach to the Christian Formation of Children**

This document is written for **parents, parish leaders, vestry members, and volunteers** who may have **little or no experience** in children's or youth Christian education. Its purpose is to explain, in plain language, the **direction, purpose, and spirit** of our Sunday School curriculum, rooted in the faith and practice of the Anglican Church.

Our approach reflects the conviction, expressed throughout the **Book of Common Prayer (1928)**, that God forms His people faithfully and gently through **Word, prayer, worship, and life together in the Church.**

### OUR SHARED FOUNDATION

In the Anglican tradition, Christian education is not only about learning information. It is about being **formed in faith.**

As the Prayer Book teaches us, we are shaped by:

- Hearing **Holy Scripture**
- Learning to **pray**
- Participating in **worship**
- Growing in love for God and neighbor

Children are not expected to understand everything at once. Instead, they are invited to grow "**from grace to grace**" as they mature.

### TWO AGE GROUPS — ONE FORMATION PATH

Our parish uses two closely aligned curricula:

- **Younger Children:** Kindergarten–Grade 2 (sometimes Grade 3)
- **Older Children & Youth:** Grades 3–8 (sometimes 4–8)

While teaching methods differ by age, **both curricula move together through the Church Year** and share the same theological heart.

## YOUNGER CHILDREN (K–2 / K–3)

### Purpose

At this stage, children are learning **trust, belonging, and reverence**. The goal is to help them know that:

- God loves them
- Jesus is their Savior and friend
- Church is a safe and holy place

### How Younger Children Learn

Young children learn best through:

- Repetition and routine
- Story and listening
- Visual symbols and simple prayers
- Gentle guidance from caring adults

Lessons are short, calm, and joyful, echoing the Prayer Book's understanding that faith is **received before it is explained**.

### What This Looks Like

- Bible stories told simply
- Short prayers spoken together
- Familiar words repeated week after week
- Crafts that reinforce one clear truth

## OLDER CHILDREN & YOUTH (GRADES 3–8 / 4–8)

### Purpose

Older students are ready to begin **intentional discipleship**. They learn not only *that* the Church believes, but *why*.

They are invited to grow in:

- Understanding Scripture
- Practicing prayer
- Living faithfully within the Church

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### **How Older Students Learn**

At this stage, students are developing:

- Confidence in using the Bible
- Thoughtful discussion and reflection
- Respect for worship and tradition
- Responsibility within the classroom

### **What This Looks Like**

- Scripture read aloud and discussed
- Age-appropriate questions
- Journaling and quiet prayer
- Encouragement of leadership through service

## **A WORD TO VOLUNTEERS**

You are not expected to be a theologian or expert teacher.

You are asked to:

- Read Scripture faithfully
- Pray with sincerity
- Treat children with patience and kindness
- Trust that God works through faithfulness, not perfection

As the Prayer Book reminds us, it is God who gives the increase.

## **CONCLUSION**

Through Scripture, prayer, and the steady rhythm of the Church Year, our Sunday School curriculum seeks to raise children who know that they belong to God, are loved by His Church, and are called to live faithfully in the world.

Curriculum Overview – K–2 / K–3 (Anglican & Lay-friendly)

## CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

### Kindergarten–Grade 2 (or Grade 3)

#### The Heart of the Younger Children’s Curriculum

In the early years, children are learning **who to trust and where they belong**. The Church receives them gently, teaching the faith as something that is **lived and loved**, not yet analyzed.

As the Book of Common Prayer teaches, we are formed by what we hear and repeat. For young children, this means **simple truths spoken often**.

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of the K–2 / K–3 curriculum is to:

- Introduce children to the love of God
- Help them recognize the Bible as a holy book
- Teach them that prayer is speaking and listening to God
- Establish church as a place of peace, reverence, and joy

#### HOW CHILDREN LEARN AT THIS AGE

Children at this stage learn primarily through:

- Repetition
- Imitation
- Routine
- Relationship

They are not expected to explain the faith, but to **receive it**.

#### TEACHING APPROACH

Lessons are designed to be:

- Short and focused
- Calm and welcoming
- Repetitive in structure
- Reinforced through simple activities

Teachers lead by example, modeling prayer, kindness, and attentiveness.

## WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

A successful lesson does not mean children remember every detail.

It means they:

- Feel safe and welcome.
- Recognize familiar prayers and stories
- Associate church with love and care
- Begin to understand that God is near

## ENCOURAGEMENT TO TEACHERS

Faith is often planted quietly. Much of its growth is unseen.

Your patience, consistency, and gentle faithfulness matter more than words.

## CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

### Grades 3–8 (or 4–8)

#### Growing in Faith within the Anglican Tradition

This overview is written for **parents and volunteers with little or no experience** teaching older children or youth. It explains the purpose and direction of the curriculum using **clear language shaped by the 1928 Book of Common Prayer** — steady, reverent, and formative.

## PURPOSE

As children grow, they are ready to take **greater ownership of their faith**.

This curriculum helps students:

- Learn to read and use **Holy Scripture** with confidence
- Understand the great stories of the Bible
- Be encouraged by the witness of the **Saints**
- Practice the Christian life through prayer, worship, and service

In Anglican life, faith is not rushed. It is formed **week by week, season by season**, within the worship of the Church.

## HOW STUDENTS LEARN (WHAT TO EXPECT)

Students in Grades 3–8 are developing:

- The ability to locate and read Scripture

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- Thoughtful questions about God and life
- A growing sense of responsibility and leadership

They are invited not only to hear the faith, but to **practice it faithfully**.

### **TEACHING APPROACH**

Lessons include:

- Scripture read aloud and discussed together
- Questions offered at different levels
- Activities that invite reflection
- Journaling and quiet prayer for older students

Teachers act as **guides**, helping students learn to listen, respond, and grow within the life of the Church.

### **WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE**

A successful lesson helps students:

- Grow comfortable using the Bible
- Understand the rhythm of the Church Year
- Develop reverence for prayer and worship
- Practice kindness, respect, and service

### **A WORD TO VOLUNTEERS**

Questions and uncertainty are part of growing faith.

Your role is not to have all the answers, but to walk faithfully with students, trusting that God forms His people through steady practice and grace.