

Books:

| <u>Title</u> | <u>Author</u> | <u>Summary</u> |
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| Faithful Families | Traci Smith | This is a practical guide that offers simple, adaptable spiritual practices to help families weave faith into everyday life. With rituals for daily routines, holidays, and life transitions, the book equips families of all shapes and schedules to nurture connection, meaning, and spiritual growth at home. |
| Stories of God at Home: A Godly Play Approach | Jerome Berryman | This book offers a simple, playful way for families to share the stories of faith at home — blending biblical narrative with each family's own stories so that children and adults can “story” together and find shared meaning. |
| Faithful Families for Advent and Christmas | Traci Smith | A collection of simple, meaningful practices that help families bring faith, connection, and intention to the Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany seasons. With easy-to-follow prayers, rituals, and activities, the book makes it accessible for even the busiest families to celebrate the season thoughtfully. It's designed to be flexible and adaptable so each family can choose what fits their traditions and rhythm. |
| Faithful Families for Lent, Easter, and Resurrection | Traci Smith | This book gives parents, caregivers, and church leaders dozens of simple, flexible practices to help families observe the season of Lent, the events of Holy Week, and the joy of Easter together. |
| Sing, Wrestle, Spin: Prayers for Active Kids | Jennifer Grant | This book reimagines prayer for children as energetic, sensory, and creative — not quiet or still. It offers a variety of playful prayer practices — from singing, dancing, and breathing to planting seeds, riding a bike, or |

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| | | tracing a labyrinth — so that kids (especially those who are active, tactile, or nonverbal) can connect with God using their bodies, senses, and movement. |
| Prayers for Faithful Families | Traci Smith | Prayers for Faithful Families gives families simple, accessible prayers — in everyday language — for a wide range of moments, from mealtimes and bedtime to big life milestones such as a new baby, a lost pet, or starting school. |
| Little Prayers for Everyday Life | Traci Smith | Offers simple, brief prayers tailored to the everyday moments of a young child's life — morning, mealtimes, bath time, bedtime, and the small events children experience like birthdays, losing a tooth, or feeling afraid. |

Websites:

| <u>URL</u> | <u>Description</u> |
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| www.tracismith.com | Here you'll find information about her books and faith-formation resources for families — such as guides for everyday prayers, seasonal rituals (like Advent, Lent, Easter), and practical tools for parents and church leaders. |
| www.pcusastore.com | The PC(USA) Store is the official online shop for resources produced by Presbyterian Church (USA). You'll find books, curricula, hymnals, worship materials, church-ordering documents (like the "Book of Order"), and other resources useful for congregations, church leaders, families, and study groups. |
| www.buildingfaith.org | Building Faith offers practical, theologically grounded resources and ideas for faith formation across all ages, including activities, prayers, liturgies, and seasonal guides. It's designed to help churches, parents, and leaders nurture spiritual growth in children, youth, and adults. |
| www.fpcffaithfulfamilies.com | This site highlights resources on PCUSA's Office of Christian Formation website. |
| https://growcurriculum.org/ | Grow Curriculum provides churches with a full-year, digital, Bible-based ministry curriculum for kids, youth, and small groups — including weekly lesson plans, teaching videos, games, parent resources, and tools for volunteer training and church-wide discipleship planning. |
| https://store.illustratedministry.com/ | The website is an online shop offering creative, faith-formation resources for churches and families — including coloring pages, curricula, worship bulletins, sticker sheets, and seasonal materials for Advent, Lent and beyond. Their materials emphasize inclusive language and thoughtful design, aimed at making spiritual teaching accessible, engaging, and adaptable for children, youth, and intergenerational communities. |
| https://resources.doubtingbeliever.com/ | The website behind Doubting Believer offers progressive, inclusive Christian-faith resources for individuals, families, and churches — including encouragement and tools for spiritual growth, ministry support, and guidance for faith journeys. |

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| https://dandelion-marketplace.com/ | Dandelion Marketplace is an online platform that curates progressive faith-formation resources — inclusive, anti-racist, trauma-informed materials for families, churches, and spiritual communities. |
| https://cecestorypath.wordpress.com/ | StoryPath is a blog from the Center for Excellence in Christian Education that offers book reviews, lectionary links, and children's- and youth-faith resources organized by age group and church calendar. It's especially useful if you're looking for developmentally appropriate faith-formation ideas tied to scripture readings and age-group needs — which fits well with your work in children's ministry. |
| https://www.prci.org/ | PRC provides churches of all sizes with practical tools, consulting, webinars, and resources — from worship planning and children's/youth ministry to finances, administration, social justice, and intergenerational faith formation. |
| https://www.sunhatsandwellieboots.com/ | Sun Hats & Wellie Boots provides free, creative, faith- and nature-based activity ideas and downloadable resource packs for children, families, and churches — including nature walks, crafts, holiday and seasonal celebrations (Advent, Lent, Easter), and activities for learning, play, prayer, and community connection. |
| https://www.muddychurch.co.uk/ | Muddy Church offers free, downloadable intergenerational faith-resources that encourage worship and community through nature — including “wandering and wondering” outdoor activities, themed trails, crafts, prayers, and seasonal celebration ideas. |
| https://www.wearesparkhouse.org/ | Sparkhouse offers a wide range of Christian faith-formation resources for early childhood, children, pre-teens, and youth ministries: curricula, leader guides, Bibles, story-based lessons, printable materials, and multimedia content to support Sunday school, home faith practices, intergenerational events, and remote learning. |

Podcasts:

| <u>Title</u> | <u>Description</u> |
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| Kids Ministry Answers | <p>Kids Ministry Answers is a podcast hosted by Stuff You Can Use that helps children's-ministry leaders and volunteers by answering real questions submitted by ministry teams.</p> <p>Each episode offers practical, actionable advice — from connecting with parents, keeping kids engaged, and helping kids memorize Scripture — to supporting volunteer teams and improving Sunday-school/children's-ministry practices.</p> |

Family Activities and Events:

Monthly or Throughout the Year

1. **Mission and Fun Day** (geared towards tweens) or 5th Sunday "Mission Sundays".
Choose a mission to support and provide a project for kids and/or families (for example: hygiene kits, food bags, cards for Meals on Wheels boxes, etc.)
Intergenerational Bible and Fun (possibly during Education/Sunday School hour)
2. **Pray-dates** - Set aside a couple of hours (maybe on a Sunday, geared towards younger families). Include a time for a Bible story and/or craft and time for free play and fellowship.
3. **Playground Pizza Parties or Potlucks** - If your church has a playground (or other playspace), order pizzas after church and invite families to hang out and play after church.
4. **Sack Lunch Sundays** - Same idea as above, but provide a cooler with ice that families can leave their lunches during worship, then stay and have lunch/play time afterwards.
5. **Presentation of Bibles** - Could be a certain time of year, present students with their own Bibles (for example, 3rd graders get new Bibles each year)
6. **"Bible Navigator" Class** - Once Bibles are presented, offer a short class (maybe 2-4 sessions) where you teach kids how to use their new Bibles, find verses, make special bookmarks, identify the different sections, etc.

January

1. **Pop-up Epiphany** - for all ages.
2. **Church-wide Chili Cook-off** - Could be to kick-off "Souper Bowl of Caring", or just for fun!

February/March

1. **Month of Love**
2. **Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner before Ash Wednesday**
3. **Take Home Lent Activities and Readings for Families** - or activities for families during Holy Week
4. **Prayer Stations** - Set up before or after worship during Lent
5. **Lent-Centering Prayer** - Offered in person or on zoom during the week.

April

1. **All-Church Easter Celebration** - Might include storytime, egg hunt, Easter/spring-themed photo booth.
2. **Creation Picnic** - Church-wide potluck picnic held outside after worship.

May

1. **Gift of Young People Worship** - Similar to "Youth Sunday", where children and Youth are worship leaders.
2. **Senior Sunday** - Recognize **ALL** graduates (graduating from elementary school, middle school, high school, college, and graduate school) during worship with a special blessing, maybe reception after worship?
3. **Pop-Up Pentecost/Pentecost Picnic** - Hold worship outside and have a picnic afterwards.
4. **Send-Home Sabbath Bags**
 - a. Families are encouraged to take these on vacation with them
 - b. Includes:
 - i. items to create a Sacred Space wherever they are
 - ii. A liturgy or devotion to use
 - iii. Wondering questions
 - iv. A bulletin to use as a Worship guide
5. **Faith at Home Fair** - Based on Traci Smith's Faithful Families Toolkit.

Summer Activities (June and July)

1. **Vacation Bible School** - fun for kids of all ages! Recruit and commission volunteers, have special VBS worship.
2. **Star Word Check-In**
3. **Mission Mania**
 - a. Day trips to local charities
 - b. Examples:
 - i. Go to a nursing home to play games or lead a short Worship service
 - ii. Volunteer at a local food pantry (age permitting)
 - iii. Shop for food to donate to a local food pantry
 - c. Another option is to help advertise and plan a family-friendly mission trip for your church.
4. **Summer Family Fun Bags** - A bag of sidewalk chalk and bubbles with a simple note saying "Have fun! Love, ____ Church"

5. **Camp Coordination** - This year, our church planned a couple of options at John Knox Ranch that we shared and advertised to parents if their children wanted to go to camp at the same time as other kids from church. This helped them know they would have some friendly faces there when they went.
6. **Outdoor Movie Nights** - Stream a movie out on the lawn of your church. Have people bring chairs or blankets to sit on and enjoy some time together!
7. **Bubbles with Buddies** - Plan a playdate and provide different bubble toys. Let the kids play while families connect.

August

1. **Blessing of Backpacks/Bags & Devices**
 - a. Invite all ages to participate (not just school age children!)
 - b. Make backpack tags for congregants to take if they would like.

September

1. **Rally Day** activities
 - a. "Fall Fun Fest" where folks can learn about all of the different opportunities at church (classes, faith formation activities, volunteer opportunities, committees, etc.)
2. **Back to School Breakfast**
 - a. Held during Education/Sunday School hour

October

1. **Blessing of the Animals**
 - a. Have a special Blessing of the Stuffed Animals during the Young Disciples Message
2. **Trunk or Treat/Fall Festival**
3. **Movie in the Patch**
 - a. Join with another church that has a Pumpkin Patch

November

1. **Month of Gratitude**
2. **Take Home Gratitude Bags**
 - a. Be creative with contents!
 - b. Maybe have something for families to make and give to another person

December

1. **One Day Advent VBS or Advent Workshop**
2. **Advent Centering Prayer**
 - a. Offered during the week
3. **Faith Formation/Sunday School Christmas Parties**
4. **Holiday Hoorah** - Similar to the Easter celebration, choose an afternoon to have the "hoorah" and provide some arts and crafts, hot cocoa, family advent wreaths, etc.
5. **Pop-up Christmas Pageant for all ages/Impromptu Pageant**

- a. Have costumes/headpieces in the Narthex for folks to pick up before worship
- 6. **Pajamas and Carols**-it's so fun for the whole family.
- 7. **Christmas Sabbath Bags**
 - a. Include items for families to have their own Worship service at home the Sunday after Christmas
 - b. With the help of the senior pastor and music director, make a short "Christmas Devotion" video to be accessible for everyone