This year we are focusing on teaching some foundations of our faith. Most of our story choices have been based around the Apostles Creed. This rotation focuses on teaching from the following statement of faith:

“I believe that all people can have life everlasting”

We hope that in this rotation kids will:

- Know and understand the Great Commission given by Jesus
- Understand their role in spreading the good news of Jesus
- Discover ways to share about Jesus and reflect his character to people around them
- Be introduced to the work of Wycliffe and their work to bring the Bible to many bible-less nations
- Be introduced to some missional work happening around the world and know their place in praying for and supporting those people
- Actively help in spreading God’s word by fund-raising for Wycliffe

Story in Focus:
Matthew 28:16-20

Memory Verse
“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

Matthew 28:19 - NIV

Food Alert
Listed below are the foods that will appear during this rotation. If your child has allergies, sensitivities or restrictions, it is the parent’s responsibility to provide an alternative food option.

Chapel Lesson:
- Tea, Milk, Liquid Smoke, Sugar (used to make a sweet African tea)

Loaves & Fishes Cooking Co.:
(Children will be baking for a cookie sale fundraiser. Students will also have a chance to sample their creations)
- Preschool/Kindergarten: Oreo cookies, white melting chocolate, sprinkles
- Grade 1-3 Boys: Gummie bears, butter, sugar, egg, vanilla, flour,
- Grade 1-3 Girls: Graham cracker crumbs, flour, butter, sugar, egg, marshmallow, chocolate kisses
- Grade 4-6: sugar, butter, egg, flour, chocolate chips
The last four verses of Matthew's Gospel; Jesus' final “marching orders” for the remaining eleven disciples; a culmination of his ministry and plan for the future for his followers. The Great Commission, at first glance, can be briefly summarized by any of the above phrases. Upon further reflection and analysis of the text, however, we are challenged to grapple with major constructs of our faith.

This lesson set is an attempt to identify, explain, and “flesh out” some of these. The over arching goal is to help children understand in intellectual, emotional, and spiritual terms what it is to be Jesus’ disciple, and what it is like to know Jesus is indeed with us now and “always, to the end of the age.”

MATTHEW’S UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE
Matthew’s Gospel is the only book which specifically reports Jesus giving “the Great Commission,” however all four Gospels and the book of Acts report that Jesus gave post-Resurrection directives to his followers. Each offers its own unique, but complementary variation on the same basic premise. All five accounts quote Jesus as commanding his disciples to “go” and “tell” (teach, preach, witness, proclaim). (Freeman, 1992)

Matthew’s version of these directives states that they were given in Galilee, at “the mountain to which Jesus had directed them” (28:16), indicating that this was all part of a plan only fully known and understood by Jesus and God. The allusion to this mountain meeting is made three times in the last three chapters.

The first comes before Jesus is arrested. After the Last Supper, before predicting Peter’s denial, Jesus tells the disciples that they will all desert him, “But after I am raised up, I will go ahead of you to Galilee.” (26:31-32)

On that first Easter morning, when Mary Magdalene and “the other Mary” went to the tomb and encountered the angel of the Lord, they were told “Do not be afraid … then go quickly and tell his disciples. He has been raised from the dead and indeed he is always with us.

One may wonder, “So what’s up with this? Why the need for repetition? Is it just a fluke?” Perhaps the answer can be found in the second verse of our passage: “When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted.” (Matthew 28:17) Hare (1993) suggests that “The disciples’ doubt is dispelled not by what they see but by what they hear … Matthew strongly subordinates seeing to hearing obediently what Jesus says.” (p.333). Perhaps Jesus already knew his disciples would doubt. It would also seem the original disciples were a lot like us.

The New Interpreter’s Bible (1995) further suggests that Matthew viewed doubt as an inherent part “of discipleship, which is always a matter of ‘little faith’.” “Doubt’ here is not a theoretical skepticism, but the risky wavering of the one who must decide when more than one possibility seems reasonable and right.” Matthew then begins to also give us insight into those for whom the Great Commission is targeted. Jesus was not looking for a group of elite believers with perfect faith. He was entrusting his mission to people just like us!

Matthew’s account is also unique in the way it states Jesus gave his instructions. The disciples were to “go” (Greek poreuthentes) making disciples, baptizing anyone who responded to the Good News, then teaching the new disciples what Christ had commanded. (Freeman, 1992)

JESUS' AUTHORITY
Before taking a look at the specific aspects of Jesus’ prescription, a key element cannot be overlooked. Jesus tells the disciples the “bottom line”: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.” (28:18) Like Jesus, we don’t have to wait for him to come into his reign and kingdom. He is already there. He was exalted to that point through his submission to human form, death, and resurrection. This commission is then grounded in his ever-present Lordship. There is no competition between God and Jesus. He is God’s representative to us. (Hare, 1993; Jackson, 2000)
As Authority then, Jesus’ words are themselves commands. He does not suggest, cajole, or imply. He clearly states “go and do these things.” His disciples, past, present, and future, then have no choice if we are to be faithful. We have been given marching orders. Since these orders come from Jesus, God’s representative, they have come from God. To help us understand our orders better, let us peruse the pages of Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance.

A STRONG GUIDE
Pulling apart the commission into key words and phrases produces the following:

Go - poreuomai: “to traverse, especially to remove, live; depart, go (away, forth, one’s way, up), (make a, take a) journey, walk”

Make disciples - this is a tricky one! One cannot find the Greek reference by looking for “make” or “disciples.” Using the KJV, one finds the word Teach – matheteuo: “enroll as scholar, be disciple, instruct, teach”

All nations - ethnos: “a foreign (non-Jewish) one, gentile, heathen, nation, people”

Baptizing - baptizo/bapto: “to cover wholly; ceremonial(ly); baptist/baptize/wash”

Teaching - didasko: “teach”

Interpretations

While this passage can and is used to mark divisions amongst the various denominations, authorities (Freeman, Hare, Jackson, NIB) appear to agree on at least the following points.

The kind of discipleship Jesus speaks of here involves an interconnected, unending process of teaching and learning about his own teachings. We are to mentor and be mentored, to live in community with one another, to teach and learn together what it means to be Christ-like in our daily lives.

This kind of community of learning is supposed to be inclusive of all. Anyone is welcome and encouraged to join.

Those that wish to be recognized as being part of this community of learning may do so through the ceremony of baptism. Matthew brings in the notion of the Trinity in this rite. There is some debate as to what the phrase “in the name of” really means, and is somewhat complicated by some translations using “into the name of.” Some view this as a reflection of the authority by which the baptism is carried out. Some see this as a liturgical formula pronounced over the baptized. Others (Jackson, 2000) interpret this as meaning “the one who is baptized becomes the possession of and under the protection of the one in whose name he is baptized.”

THE BEST NEWS OF ALL

The last verse of the passage provides reassurance and empowerment. Jesus promises to be with us always, daily, forever. We are never alone, never left to our own devices, without hope, power or authority.

ALL CONNECTED

It isn’t by chance that students have just spent an entire rotation learning about Pentecost and the Holy Spirit. If we had followed chronological order, the Pentecost lesson would have followed this rotation. In the Bible we read about Jesus’ command to go into the world and preach His Good News. He also tells His disciples that before following these instructions they must wait until a gift comes to them - the gift of the Holy Spirit. As believers today, we don’t have to wait! We already have the gift of the Holy Spirit and God’s power can empower us today to share His words of salvation, grace and love to the world around us.

Students can be assured that the power and presence of Jesus Christ is alive and with them in their own lives and also readily available to be shared and given to others. We can boldly go into the world and do as Jesus commanded!

### Current Volunteer Schedule

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<td>Thou Art Studio (Grade 1-6) -</td>
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<td>Deanna Fuellbrandt</td>
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<td>Marla Cameron</td>
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<td>Girls</td>
<td>Chapel</td>
<td>Boys</td>
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<td>LOAVES &amp; FISHES COOKING CO</td>
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<td>11:30</td>
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<td>Dramatic @ Palestine Productions</td>
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<td>9:30</td>
<td>Chapel</td>
<td>FISHES COOKING CO</td>
<td>Bible Times Square</td>
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<td>June 1</td>
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<td>Communion Sunday</td>
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<td>All Ages join their family for the Church Service.</td>
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<td>June 8</td>
<td>9:30</td>
<td>Bible Times Square</td>
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<td>LOAVES &amp; FISHES COOKING CO</td>
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<td>June 15</td>
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<td>Year End Party - CHAPEL/BIBLE TIMES SQUARE</td>
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*PLEASE NOTE:* The schedule is subject to change. Please check with the church office for any updates.
OVERVIEW OF WORKSHOPS AND OBJECTIVES:
Throughout an entire rotation children learn through a variety of learning styles, repetition and varying story viewpoints. The entire rotation is designed to increase memory retention, dig deep into scripture and inspire a long term faith journey.

To get the best view of the overall teaching objectives, we’ve broken them down by workshop for you to see.

WYCLIFFE - THE GREAT COMMISSION IN ACTION
The following three workshops take a special look at the work of Wycliffe. Students will take a peek at some of the work currently happening around the world to help spread the word of God.

1: Everyone needs the Bible @ THE CHAPEL
This lesson introduces students to the work of Wycliffe and the fact that Bible translation is an important way to spread the message of Jesus. This lesson includes a fun magic trick object lesson, a cup of Dessert Dwellers tea and some prayer time for bibless people.

2: Reaping the Harvest @ BIBLE TIMES SQUARE
This workshop looks into the work of Wycliffe and discusses the hard work and patience required sometimes when following the Great Commission. Students will plant a bean seed to be reminded to wait, and to work hard for a great harvest in the spiritual mission assignment Jesus has us given us.

3: All Around the World @ FISHERMANS.NET
This workshop takes a visual look around the world through video and lets students see first hand the work of Wycliffe and the way they are reaching the world for Jesus. Students will watch videos and discuss what they see.

DRAMA @ PALESTINE PRODUCTIONS
Through dramatic poses, children will explore what each part of the Great Commission means and also how they can play a part in reflecting Jesus to others around them.

GREAT COOKIE COMMISSION @ LOAVES & FISHES
Kids will participate in the great commission, helping to spread the good news, by raising money for Wycliffe through a cookie bakesale. Each age group will make a different type of cookie and then sell them for donations.

CLAYMATION @ THOU ART STUDIO
Children will create sculptures with plasticine representing “going about” in their daily lives, with a reminder that wherever we go and whatever we do, we are to look for and use opportunities to teach others about Jesus. This lesson will help students understand that we don’t necessarily have to go far to follow Jesus’ Commission, we often accomplish this through our actions.

MEGAPHONES @ THOU ART STUDIO
Our youngest children will create a megaphone while they learn about Jesus’ last instructions to spread the gospel.
**Great Cookie Commission Bake Sale**

Kids will be selling the cookies they made during Street 2:52 on Sunday, June 15th between the 9:30 & 11:00 services. All of the proceeds will go directly to support Wycliffe as they translate the Bible for communities all over the world. A limited number of cookies will be available and will be sold in small snack-sized bags. Don't forget to bring some cash to purchase a cookie (or two) for yourself or your children to enjoy as a treat.

**SUMMER BREAK!**

This is the last rotation before Street 2:52 goes on a break for the summer. Keep your eyes on the bulletin/website for updates on programming for young children and VBS.

**VOLUNTEERS:**

A HUGE shout-out and thank you to all those who have volunteered as teachers, buddies, hall monitors and prep workers this past year. Whether or not our kids always remember to say it - they so appreciate your help with Street 2:52. We couldn't provide our kids with excellent Sunday morning programming without your help and we know the time, commitment and energy it takes to provide it. THANK YOU!!!!!!

We're working hard to get the ENTIRE YEAR schedule for 2014-2015 ready by the end of June so that scheduling and planning ahead is easier for you in the coming year. You'll have an opportunity to view the schedule on the church website, by email and also at a booth that will be set up for several weeks late-summer/early fall. Hopefully this will help to ensure you can pick workshops that most interest you throughout the year and also coordinate your schedule in an advanced manor rather than waiting to see volunteer opportunities every few weeks.