YouthGuide

A guide to help your congregation nurture spiritual growth in high school youth

What is your congregation's plan to disciple high school youth?
Have you taken time to think through what faith themes you want your youth to explore during their critical teen years? Will they be exposed to the full range of the biblical story?

As a youth pastor, sponsor, or Sunday school teacher, don't leave your curriculum choices to chance. It's easy to plan on the basis of which curriculum looks the most exciting, or to choose topics a few people consider hot at the moment. But a more intentional plan will ensure a solid path of discovery that invites your youth to become committed followers of Jesus.

The purpose of this guide is to help you look at the big picture as you plan learning activities, whether in Sunday school or in other settings.

The charts below will help you plan ahead so youth get a comprehensive grounding in Bible, Anabaptist-Mennonite theology and history, and habits of Christian living. A third chart allows you to keep track of studies for each class of youth in your congregation.

Faith formation during the high school years happens at church in a variety of settings, including mentoring, baptism classes, and congregational worship. *YouthGuide* focuses on the two primary settings where instruction is most regular and ongoing—Sunday school and youth group.

The charts correspond to these two learning environments. Use them flexibly, according to your group's structure and meeting times. They cover a wide range of Scripture texts and recommend Mennonite Church resources. They encourage integration of youth ministries into the congregation; allow flexibility to include timely or new topics; and take into account the social, cognitive, and spiritual development of youth.

YouthGuide integrates four main categories of study during the high school years:

1. Bible study and theology from an Anabaptist/Mennonite perspective.
2. Christian practices, such as the spiritual disciplines of prayer, Bible reading, and worship.
3. Mennonite Church history, theology, and practice.
4. Contemporary or personal issues such as acquaintance rape, depression, sexuality, relationships, peace, politics, justice, stewardship, and service and witness.

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Sunday School

Help youth apply the Bible to real life and discuss their faith using *Generation Why*. This all-in-one curriculum guides youth and their leaders on a journey for meaning and identity, encouraging youth to encounter and explore Scripture to make it their own. In a time of violence, injustice, materialism, and hard questions, *Generation Why* offers a different point of view.

The popular *Generation Why* series has been updated for a new generation. Each curriculum unit has either five or six sessions, plus an extender session, and includes reproducible handouts. For more information about *Generation Why*, go to www.mennomedia.org

The titles may be used in any order, and we offer one suggestion below. The amount of sessions varies for each title, so see the chart on the next page for additional options to complete a quarter.

	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer
2014–15	**Keeping the Garden** A Faith Response to God's Creation	**How to Read the Bible** Building Skills for Bible Study	**The Radical Reign** Parables of Jesus	**A Speck in the Universe** The Bible on Self-Esteem and Peer Pressure
2015–16	**Testing the Waters** Basic Tenets of Faith	**Clueless and Called** Discipleship in the Gospel of Mark	**Fight Right** A Christian Approach to Conflict Resolution	**Who is God?**
2016–17	**How Do You Know?** From Proverbs, Job, and Ecclesiastes	**Do Miracles Happen?** Signs and Wonders in the Gospel of John	**Rocky Road** The Beatitudes and the Sermon on the Mount	**Mantras, Menorahs, and Minarets** Encountering other Faiths
2017–18	**Does God Fight?** Violence in the Bible	**Do the Right Thing** Ethics Shaped by Faith	**How to Be a True Friend**	**Review a favorite Generation Why theme**

Youth Group

The following chart guides you through a four-year cycle of resources. You can interchange or replace units to suit the needs of your youth group.

Titles marked with an * have a free study guide available on the MennoMedia website. For the study guides, and information about all of the titles, go to www.mennomedia.org.

Year	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer
One	**Adventures with the Anabaptists** Jeanne Greiser and Carol Duerksen **Stories: How Mennonite Came to Be** John D. Roth*	**Practices: Mennonite Worship and Witness** John D. Roth* **Beliefs: Mennonite Faith and Practice** John D. Roth*	**Via: Exploring the Way of Christ**	**Decide for Peace: A Guide for Personal Bible Study and Reflection on Conscientious Objection** Eddy Hall **Peace DVD**
Two	**Thermostat (sessions on war, peace, and Christian Conscience)** Mennonite Central Committee **Let's Talk** Barry Bartel	**Money Matters for Youth: Integrating Faith and Finances, Everence** **The Mennonite Handbook**	**Sacred Search: Encountering God during Lent** Angela Reed	**Pre-convention Bible study** **Close to Home pamphlet topics*:** Eating Disorders, Pornography, Depression, Acquaintance Rape
Three	**Radical Jesus: A Graphic History of Faith** Sandra Sauder and Paul Buhle, eds.*	**Tent of Meeting: A 25-Day Adventure with God** Julie Ellison White **Dive: Devotions for Deeper Living** Cindy Massanari Breeze	**God's Story, Our Story: Exploring Christian Faith & Life** Michele Hershberger	**Merge: A Guidebook for Youth Service Trips** Krista Dutt
Four	**Body & Soul: Healthy Sexuality and the People of God, Youth Study Leader Guide**	**Claim(ing) Faith: Youth Discover the Confession of Faith**	**Dig In: 13 Scriptures to Help Us Know the Way** **Read the Book: A Reading Record for the Whole Bible**	**Pre-convention Bible study** **Close to Home pamphlet topics*:** Bullying, Electronic Addiction, Teenage Pregnancy, Self-harm

Contemporary Issues

Check out these websites for resources on the issue you choose to study:

- ***Close to Home* pamphlet series:** mental health, abuse, addictions—www.mennomedia.org/closetohome
- **MennoMedia:** Beyond the News (current events), Ted & Company DVDs, further topics—www.mennomedia.org
- **Everence:** stewardship resources—www.everence.com
- **Mennonite Central Committee:** peace, development, global issues—www.mcc.org

Tip

Resource books for youth pastors and leaders:

- *Beyond Me: Grounding Youth Ministry in God's Story*, Wendell Loewen
- *Youth Ministry at a Crossroads*, Andy Brubacher Kaethler and Bob Yoder, editors

Our Curriculum Planner

Use this chart to record what resources are being used in Sunday school and youth group.

	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer
Year One Sunday school Youth group	----------	----------	----------	----------
Year Two Sunday school Youth group	----------	----------	----------	----------
Year Three Sunday school Youth group	----------	----------	----------	----------
Year Four Sunday school Youth group	----------	----------	----------	----------

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