



TRAIL MARKER SEVEN

My Bible



Introduction

This Faith Trail marker will provide a time for parents and children to find their way around the Bible as well as a little bit of the history of the Bible. It will also offer ideas about how families can read their Bible in a way that is fun and interesting!

Things to do

- Organise name tags
- Make copies of *Books of the Bible Word Find* (Appendix 1)
- Prepare a card in an envelope with your address on it
- Make copies of *The Anatomy of the Bible* (Appendix 2)
- Make copies of the *Bookmark* for children to decorate (Appendix 3)
- Make copies of *Chapter-Verse Format Activity* (Appendix 4)
- Make copies of *Read a Story at a Time* handout (Appendix 5)
- Arrange to order suitable tracts from the Lutheran Tract Mission. Visit their website www.ltm.org.au for available tracts. Some worth considering are: Books of the Bible bookmarks, Bible verse stickers.

Things you need

- A small amount of un-popped popcorn in snap lock bags for each child.
- A Bible for each family or have them bring their own.
- Whiteboard and markers or butcher's paper and markers.
- Textas and/or pencils.
- Laminator and person to laminate bookmarks.
- Popped corn for snack at the end of the session!

Session Outline

1. Welcome & Warm-up.
2. Naming the Faith Trail marker.
3. Equipping the Parents and the Children
4. End of Session Blessing
*Ideally the families and children will take part in a **Rite of Gifting** and blessing during the worship service following the Faith Trail event.*
5. Rite of Gifting
(see separate file).

Welcome and Warm Up

Welcome guests, write them a name tag and invite them to sit down in a circle, adults in a chair and children on the floor in front. Hand out *Books of the Bible Word Find* activity sheet (Appendix 1) and a pencil to children/families as they come. Invite them to complete sheet while waiting for others to arrive.

Hand out Bibles to families that don't have one. Begin by asking families to open their Bible to the index. Say: **This is near the front of your Bible. Your Bible is one big book with many different books within it. Maybe some of your reading books at school have many stories by many authors in one book. When you have found the index, find a book that begins with the same letter as your name. Since none of the books begins with a B,F,Q,U,V,W,X, or Y, if your name begins with any of these letters you can pick any book that you like the sound of.**

Go around the circle and let each person introduce themselves using their name and the name of the book of the Bible they have chosen.



Naming: TRAIL MARKER SEVEN: My Bible

Hand out a small amount of un-popped popcorn in small clear snap-lock plastic bags to each child.

Move on to this next story making no reference to the popcorn.

Hold up an envelope that has a card in it. Tell the children that the letter comes from a loved one: parent, grandparent, or friend. Tell them that it arrived at your place last week.

Do you like getting mail? How about mail that looks like this? What kind of mail do you think this is? Should we see what is inside?

Comment that you don't really feel like opening it today. You are feeling too tired, you are a bit busy. Suggest that it probably isn't that important anyway. Put it aside and tell the children you will look at it another time.

Refer back to the popcorn. Ask the children why they didn't eat their snack? Liken the popcorn to the unopened card, then to the Bible. These things have to be opened up to enjoy them. If we don't open the pages of the Bible and look inside, we won't discover the treasures hidden there. That's what this time together today is about. Discovering how to open this book, hold up your Bible, and discover what's inside.

Equipping

INTRODUCTION

The word **Bible** comes from the Greek word **biblia**, which means **books**. Sometimes the Bible is called Scriptures, which means **writings**. There are 66 books in the Bible, written by many different people.

There are two main parts of the Bible. **Ask if the children know what they are?** The Old Testament and the New Testament. **Testament** means **promise**. **Ask the children why we would use the word promise to name the parts of the Bible?**

LOOKING THROUGH THE BIBLE

Let's have a look at how the Bible is organised. Work through *The Anatomy of the Bible* (Appendix 2), inviting participants to colour in as you discuss each section of the handout.

LANGUAGES OF THE BIBLE

The Old Testament contains the books about God and the world before Jesus was born. The books were originally written in Hebrew. The writers did not use vowels, spaces, full stops, commas, chapter numbers, verse numbers, or any of the punctuation we use today. Hebrew is also written and read from right to left.





TRAIL MARKER SEVEN

My Bible



Write on poster paper or whiteboard. Y R F T F G S L B B H T

Here is an example of an English sentence written in that Hebrew style: What does it say?

Answer: **The Bible is a gift for you.**

The **New Testament** was written after Jesus had lived on Earth. The books are all about Jesus and his followers. It was first written in Greek, which was a language many people understood during the time of Jesus. Greek is read from left to right like English, and it contains vowels. But there were still no punctuation marks in Greek.

HOW THE BIBLE CAME TO US

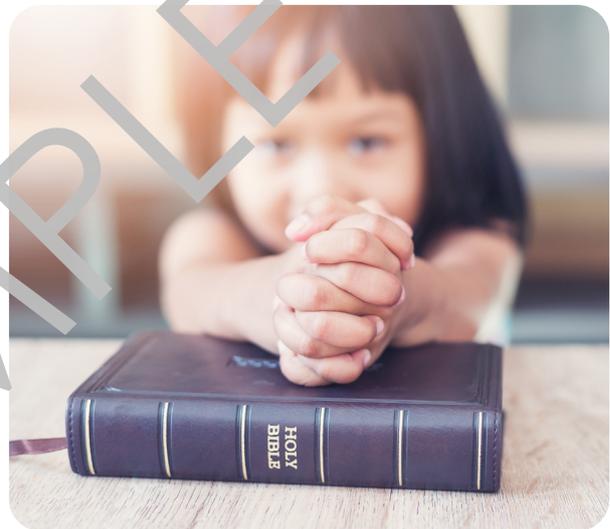
At first, the stories of the Bible were passed from one person to another, from father to son, mother to daughter, by word of mouth. This is known as ‘**oral tradition.**’ It was the only way people could learn about God, because there was no written language! When we read Genesis 1 and Genesis 2, we read two versions of the same story, each one from a different oral tradition.

Later, people we think of as ‘cavemen’ started drawing pictures that told stories. They drew pictures on the walls of their caves and later on stone tablets or pieces of stone. The stories of the Old Testament were first printed in this way.

About 3,000 years ago (1,000 years before Jesus was born), these pictures, which were called **pictographs**, became alphabets.

Once there were alphabets, it became a little easier to write God’s story. But not much—people still wrote on stone, then papyrus (paper made from plants), and later vellum (paper made from very thin pieces of cloth). People called scribes did all of the writing by hand. Just think what it would be like to copy your Bible in your best hand writing. It’s a big job!

This writing by hand went on for more than 2,000 years. Languages changed as some countries became more powerful. About the time Jesus lived, the Romans were among the most powerful in the world. Their language was Latin. The original Hebrew and



Greek Bible stories were translated into Latin. Over time the Bible has been translated into many different languages.

Your Bible is one of millions of copies. But it is the same story that children all over the world read—the story of God and God’s love for you.

Before moving on to the next section, let the children take a break and invite them to spend a few minutes colouring and decorating a bookmark. (Appendix 3). Provide textas and pencils for this. Pre-cut these to save time, then offer to have them laminated. You might ask your helper to do this while you continue with the Trail Marker.