

How to use the modules

What are they?

The modules cover five topics that can be used as an entire curriculum or as supplementary sessions to an existing confirmation course. The modules are 'God's Big Story', 'The Old Testament', 'The Story of Jesus', 'The New Testament', and 'Being Lutheran'.

You can use the modules in whatever way is most helpful for you. You may choose to use an entire module, or, you may choose to use individual sessions to design your own program. You could just use parts of the sessions or an activity or set of discussion questions to enhance what you have already created. The modules are designed to be flexible and to help you, the leader, create relational and compelling sessions as part of a lifelong discipleship journey.

God's Big Story

1. Telling Our Stories
2. God's Big Story: Creation
3. God's Big Story: Fall
4. God's Big Story: Redemption

The Old Testament

1. God's Promise
2. The Chosen People
3. God Frees the Slaves
4. The Judges of Israel
5. The Kings of Israel
6. Songs of God's People
7. Words of Wisdom
8. Exile

The Story of Jesus

1. The Birth of Jesus
2. Baptism and Wilderness
3. The Parables of Jesus
4. The Miracles of Jesus
5. The Sermon on the Mount
6. The Greatest Commandment
7. Holy Week
8. The Resurrection
9. The Great Commission

The New Testament

1. Pentecost
2. The Early Church
3. The Damascus Road Experience
4. Paul's Journey and the Gentiles
5. Paul's Letters
6. Revelation

Being Lutheran

1. The Life of Martin Luther
2. Baptism
3. The Apostles' Creed
4. The Lord's Prayer
5. The Ten Commandments
6. Calling
7. The Word
8. Worship
9. Holy Communion
10. The Office of the Keys

How are the modules structured?

The modules are designed to approach thematic topics such as *The Old Testament* and *Being Lutheran* through a series of sessions. Modules have anywhere from 4 to 10 sessions. Each module has key knowledge and belief objectives that it aims to address. Knowledge objectives are the stories, facts, traditions and histories that the students will learn throughout the module. Belief objectives are more heart focused. They are the core beliefs and questions that students will encounter as they move through the topic.

Each module also introduces faith practices for the students to participate in during sessions and on their own at home and with their families. The module weaves in three practices throughout the series: a prayer practice, a reading scripture practice, and a life/community practice. Each practice is repeated a few times throughout the module in order to give the students opportunities to become familiar with the practice and process their experiences with the group.

How are the sessions structured?

Each session follows the same overall format of four main sections: *Welcome and relationship building*, *Interactive learning*, *Application*, and *Wrap-up*. This format is intentional, as it leads the group through a time of welcome and guides them into a time of learning and deep conversation. Finally, it leaves the students thinking about how to apply what they have learned and gives them a plan for taking it home. So, while the sessions can be rearranged to fit your group's needs, it is best not to rearrange these key pieces.

Welcome and relationship building

The beginning of the class is a wonderful opportunity to spend some intentional time building relationships. One way to do this is by having *Caring Conversations* with the students. Go around in the large group or in small groups and ask each student to share a *high* (something good) and a *low* (something not so good) from the week. Another way to open a *caring conversation* is to ask an open-ended question – especially if it gives students a chance to give a fun, personalised response. We have included both types of discussion questions in the sessions, but feel free to come up with your own.

Of course, there are many ways to build relationships with the students! Enjoy a meal together, play a game, or do a fun activity. Sometimes, we have included suggestions for these types of activities in the sessions.

Interactive learning

Interactive learning time is the portion of the session devoted to understanding something new about faith, the Bible, or the church. In many ways, it is the foundation because it introduces the content. While the content is a focus, the sessions are written so that the learning time is relational and appeals to people with various interests and personalities. By entering into the topic in a few different ways, the students will have a chance to reflect and learn about the topic at increasing levels of depth.

The Interactive learning section always includes an activity, a reading and discussion, and a teaching. The order of these pieces will change depending on the session. Sometimes, the activity will be first, other times the teaching will be first. Feel free to rearrange the suggested order depending on your own needs.

The activity is a 10-15 minute portion of the learning time that approaches the content in a creative or interactive way. It could include a group task, an art or writing project, a game or stations of various kinds. Questions follow the activity in order to help the students understand how the activity is connected to the topic.

The reading and discussion portion of the learning time introduces the students to a text (usually a Biblical text) and gives them tools to examine the text together more closely. The discussion questions will allow the group to reflect on the text more deeply.

In each module, the *Teach* section of *Interactive learning* gives a summary of the information that may need to be conveyed directly to your students. When you do this, we suggest keeping it short and interesting. We do not tell you exactly how to teach this information to your students; that is up to you. You can stand in front of the group and address them for 3-5 minutes, you can play one of the suggested video resources, or you can give students a (brief) handout and have them read through the information together. The thing to keep in mind is that this teaching time is one of three important pieces of the Interactive learning time. You risk losing the relational aspect by spending too much time on direct, rather than interactive, instruction.

Application

During the application section, students move from grappling with a topic to thinking about how the topic has importance, or application, in their daily lives. In the application, it is important to help students ‘do’ something with what they have learned.

Sometimes, the application comes through a reflective activity in which students are invited to consider how the topic at hand will impact their decisions or actions moving forward. Other times, faith practices are used to give students a tool for real-life application.

Wrap-up

The aim of the *Wrap-up* section is to give your students a plan for how they are going to take home (*takeaways*) what they have learned, and to involve their families in applying what they have learned. Plan on doing this at the end of each session. Give students as much ownership over this process as you can so that they will be more likely to engage in it during the week. Follow-up is important and the job of the leaders. Be sure to begin each session by reminding students about their *takeaways* and ask for volunteers to share how it went when they tried it with their family or friends. If you follow up with these questions each week, students will get in the habit of talking about them during the week.

How long will the sessions run?

First, decide how long your course will run. Will you have a short course that will last 8-10 weeks or longer? Will it run for the majority of the school year, or something in between? To determine the length of time for your course, ask yourself what content you want to cover and how long it will take. Also, it is important to understand what the people in your congregation expect in terms of a length of time for the confirmation course.

After determining the length of your course, you will need to select your days and times for meeting. Sessions can happen on any day, but it is important to find a day that works most easily with the families that you serve. Consult parents, students and potential leaders to find the most suitable time. Sessions typically last 1.5-2 hours; however, there are also ways to alter the length if needed. A few longer half-day or full-day sessions could replace more frequent shorter sessions, as could a weekend camp or retreat.

WELCOME AND RELATIONSHIP BUILDING: 15-20 minutes

INTERACTIVE LEARNING: 30-45 minutes

APPLICATION: 30-45 minutes

WRAP-UP: 10-15 minutes

Please note that the time distinctions are approximate and will vary with each session. The welcome and Wrap-up will tend to be shorter, while the Interactive learning and application will make up the primary blocks of time. If you have a long learning time during a session, you will need to shorten your response time, and vice versa.

A note about lesson resources

Wherever possible, we've included extra resources that may be useful. We have watched or read all of the resources that we suggest, but we do not necessarily endorse or recommend other content from the same sources if we have not specifically reviewed it.

Please also note that sometimes links change or content is removed. Often, a google search of the topic with the addition of 'for youth' or 'for teens' will return helpful results if you'd like to have a go at searching for some resources yourself.