

we

ENTER THE TABERNACLE

5 Events

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5 Events

we



Grand Rapids, Michigan

We'd like to hear from you! Please feel free to contact us at 1-800-333-8300 or editorial@faithaliveresources.org with your comments and questions about WE.

Faith Alive is grateful to Diane Geerlinks and Betty Panza for writing the events in this book.

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WELCOME TO WE

You have in front of you an exciting new concept in faith nurture: a series of intergenerational events that can bring your entire church family closer as you learn about God and God's story.

With WE, your whole congregation gathers monthly, with all ages together. Why? Because to grow in faith, we need each other! To truly be the body of Christ we need the enthusiasm of children, the energy of teens, and the wisdom and experience of young adults through senior citizens. We all have things to teach each other, and we all can help point each other to God.

Why Intergenerational Learning?

In the past few years, many educators have begun to identify some drawbacks of the “silo” approach to faith nurture in which all age groups are separated. That approach has allowed churches to tailor their teaching to the learning abilities of particular groups, but it has also had some unintended negative results, such as

- a lack of community within the church family.
- the loss of opportunities to learn and grow with those who are in different places on the faith journey.
- parents' expectation that the church will be the primary source of faith nurture for their children.

As a result, many churches are looking for ways to rebuild community and spend time learning and growing together.

In the book *Intergenerational Faith Formation*, the authors contend, “There has never been a stronger need for intergenerational faith formation. . . . When we bring the different age groups together, we see a revitalization of the faith of the elders and a deeper understanding of the faith traditions on the part of the young” (Twenty-Third Publications, 2008, p. 14). They also argue that all-ages faith nurture empowers parents to share their faith more openly at home.

Why WE?

We're so excited that you've chosen WE—not just because it's a great program that's lots of fun, but because of what WE can do for your faith community:

- WE's event-based format makes it fun for people of all ages to grow together as they learn from each other and grow in faith as they hear God's story.
- WE complements EVERY church education, faith nurture, and children's ministry program. Whatever you're using now, you can use WE alongside it.
- WE is easy to set up and easy to use. And we've kept advance preparation to a minimum—a feature your volunteers will appreciate.
- It's cost-efficient—all you need is this book, inexpensive supplies, some great food, some volunteers, and you're ready to go!

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How long does a WE event last?

Each WE event is designed to last about two hours, including a meal. If you serve only snacks or dessert, plan on an hour and a half or less.

Why include a meal?

A prepared meal is often a big draw for busy families. Sharing a meal also makes it easier for people to meet others and to feel more comfortable when it's time to interact and learn together. It's also a great time to try foods from the different ethnic groups in your church or community.

How many people should be seated at a table?

Plan for six to eight people per table. This ensures that everyone has a chance to talk and be easily heard. The session instructions also give you fun tips for making seat assignments to help people mingle and meet each other.

Will all ages really feel welcome?

Yes! Your WE group will be talking about open-ended questions that don't require extensive Bible knowledge or a "right" answer. The activities we've included are fun for all ages. No matter how old you are or where you are on your faith journey, a WE event is fun, informal, and faith-building.

Why is it important to give people something to take home?

When the event is over, the learning should continue! After each event, every household will receive a devotional guide to use before the next event. We've also provided suggestions for other take-home items to hand out at the end of an event. These are optional, but they're fun and meaningful!

How do WE events help people of all ages live out their faith?

During each event participants will be challenged to consider how they can or will live out what they have learned. In addition to occasional service opportunities built right into some events, we've also included an activity called "Take It Further" in which you'll find great ideas to help participants take what they've learned even further together.

Can we use WE for midweek family ministry or in a home church?

Absolutely! Although WE events are especially designed to involve your entire congregation, they will also work wonderfully in a family ministry, in a home church, in Christian school communities with parents and grandparents, and more! Anywhere an intergenerational group gathers, WE can work.

MAKING WE HAPPEN— PLANNING TIPS

WE: Enter the Tabernacle

The theme of this WE series is “Enter the Tabernacle.” In five events your church family will discover how the design of the Old Testament tabernacle reflects God’s salvation plan and points to Jesus Christ.

Gather Your Team

To make a WE event happen without doing all the work yourself, you’ll want to identify the following people to help. Some of these duties can be combined if your volunteer pool is small.

EVENT COORDINATOR/GREETER does the planning, promotes the event to the congregation and community, recruits volunteers, and gathers supplies. Also serves as the greeter by welcoming people, handing out nametags at the door, and passing out the take-home items before people leave.

EVENT HOST introduces the event, keeps it moving, and closes the event in prayer. Choose someone who’s outgoing, time-conscious, and comfortable in front of a crowd.

SONG LEADER provides musical accompaniment and teaches new songs. Consider asking a college student or musical teen to help in this way.

FOOD/CLEANUP COORDINATOR organizes the food for each event, whether it’s a served meal, a potluck, or a snack, and cleans up after the meal.

A/V TECHNICIAN sets up, tests, and runs the sound system and projection equipment if you’re using them for this event.

BUILD COORDINATOR coordinates the building of the tabernacle furnishings and curtains that will be used during the events. All of the furnishings should be completed before event 2. (For more information on the build, see p. 10 in this book).

At your initial meeting with your team, spend some time helping everyone catch the WE vision. For help, see the document titled “Getting Started with WE” (a copy is in your Event box, and you can also find it on the event CD) and the “Welcome to WE” and “FAQ” sections of this guide (pp. 5 and 6 respectively).

Set up a meeting two weeks before each WE event to go through the event outline together. Make sure each person on your team is clear about his or her role. Meet once more before each WE event to touch base and tie up loose ends.

Promote Your WE Event

On the WE event CD you'll find promotional items your church can use to spread the word about WE. We suggest you consider promoting the WE event in some of the following ways:

- Church bulletin insert
- PowerPoint announcement before or after worship service
- Invitation emailed to members
- Postcard invitations sent to homes
- Posters displayed in common areas
- Fliers in member mailboxes

RSVPs

It's important to plan a way to gather RSVPs, whether it's on a signup sheet or by email. You'll need to know in advance how many people will be attending each WE event so you know how much food and activity materials to have on hand. But be sure to set extra places for last-minute attendees!

Room Setup

For every WE event you'll need the following:

- a welcome table by the door to put nametags on
- tables and chairs set up in groups of 6 to 8
- tables and tableware for food service
- sound amplification equipment, unless your group is very small
- projection equipment for song lyrics and PowerPoint (optional)

Any additional setup requirements will be noted in each event's instructions.

Event Supplies

At the beginning of each step in the event, we list the supplies needed and offer setup tips. Most of the supplies are basic, inexpensive things that you'll easily be able to find in your church or borrow.

Including People of All Abilities

Any time an intergenerational group gets together, there will be people with varying abilities. Consider the needs in your particular congregation, and make adjustments as appropriate. Here are some tips that may help:

- To assist those with hearing impairments or difficulties, hold all meetings in a room with a sound system if possible (or better yet, a hearing loop) and insist that anyone addressing the whole group use a microphone.
- If there are people in your church who have sight impairments, ask for volunteers to sit next to them, guide them as requested if movement is necessary, and describe any visual elements of the event.
- On your signup sheet, leave space for people to list dietary concerns or severe allergies.
- When choosing between activity options, consider the needs of anyone who has issues with mobility.

- If there are people in your church who don't like loud noises or a busy environment, consider designating one table a "quiet table" so they won't be as disturbed by loud talking or other noises that might bother them.
- Ask for volunteers to serve as assistants for people with intellectual disabilities. Ask the assistants to help explain instructions, guide the person through activities, or help in other ways.
- Make sure all children in your group feel included. When writing is called for, assist anyone who needs help. Make sure there's room for children to participate in all discussions and activities.
- Have translators available if there are people in your church who are learning English as a second language.

A Word about Sound Systems

If a sound system is available at your church, you'll find it to be very helpful for WE events. It's especially helpful for people who have a hearing impairment, and it will ensure that everyone who speaks to the large group can be heard. If your meeting space is small or your church doesn't have sound equipment, make sure to ask everyone who addresses the large group to speak loudly and distinctly.

Music

Singing together is a great community-builder. If there's a piano in your meeting space, that's perfect for accompaniment. If not, ask a guitarist to lead your singing. The theme song for *WE: Enter the Tabernacle* is "In the Presence of Your People" (see pp. 16-17 in this book and in the Reproducibles.pdf file on the event CD). If it's unfamiliar to your group, have a song leader teach it to them. After each WE event we also provide lists of other suggested songs that go with each event's theme.

Song suggestions are drawn from a variety of songbooks and other sources. Many of these songs can be found in the following hymnals and songbooks available from Faith Alive at www.FaithAliveResources.org or 1-800-333-8300:

- *Contemporary Songs for Worship*
- *Psalter Hymnal*
- *Sing, a New Creation*
- *Sing With Me* (children's songbook)

WE events are also great times to have someone from another culture teach songs with new musical patterns or songs in a different language.

Take It Further

In the reproducible pages for each event you'll find cards that contain ideas for continuing the learning of the WE event in small groups, youth groups, and homes.

Building the Tabernacle Model

Instructions for the Build Coordinator

The last event of this series will include an actual walk-through of a model of the tabernacle. This is a moving and educational experience. But the tabernacle furnishings are also incorporated into Events 2-4, so all the furnishings should be constructed before event 2.

Unless you love to build things yourself, you'll want to gather volunteers to help build the tabernacle furnishings. If that sounds complicated, don't worry. We've provided clear and easy instructions for constructing each piece.

Since there will not be time during the WE sessions to build the tabernacle furnishings, we suggest two options:

Option 1: Small Group Build

Identify a small group of people in your congregation who would be willing to gather supplies and build the furnishings before the events begin. It's helpful to have a woodworker, someone who loves crafts, and someone who can sew. There may be some seniors in your church who would enjoy this project immensely and have the time to complete it. This option is easier than the second option but doesn't offer as much intergenerational interaction.

Option 2: Large Group Build

Schedule a Saturday time right after Event 1 when all WE participants can help build the tabernacle furnishings (which need to be completed before Event 2). This will take more planning and organizing, but it's another great opportunity for people of all ages to interact and learn together. Here are some tips:

- Publicize this opportunity at your first event and ask people to sign up on a sheet you provide.
- Send a reminder by mail or email.
- Gather all needed supplies well in advance.
- On the day of the build, set up one "station" for building each furnishing. Include instructions for building the piece, the illustration of how it should look, and all needed supplies.
- Be available to direct workers to stations that fit their skills, answer questions, and help people when they're stuck.
- Take photos while the build is happening, and publish them in your church newsletter or on your church website to help build excitement about the WE events.
- Store the furnishings in a safe place until they're needed.

EVENT 1

GOD LIVES WITH US

Scripture

Exodus 19; 25:1-9; John 1:14, Rev. 21:3

Event Focus

In this event we'll see that because God loves his people, he wants to live with us.

This WE event, like all the others, has three steps:

Step 1: Welcome, Gathering, and Building Community

Gather as a group to enjoy some good food as you talk informally about the types of homes you have lived in and any camping experiences you've had.

Step 2: Learning Experiences for All Ages

Enter the story through a drama or a dramatic reading. Then live into the story by playing a game about the tabernacle.

Step 3: Reflect and Praise

Share what you've learned, praise God in song, and learn how to "take it further" with ideas for living out what you've learned.

These activities are designed to help WE participants

- understand that the tabernacle pictures God's complete plan to dwell with his people.
- feel awe in the face of God's holiness and mercy.
- express gratitude for how God provides a way for us to live with him.

SUPPLIES AND PREP

FOOD/CLEANUP COORDINATOR

Food Ideas

- Manna: Various types of bread
- Quail: chicken (roasted, baked, or fried)
- Green salad or fruit salad
- Dessert: Honey cake (see recipe on p. 26 in this book and in the Reproducibles.pdf file on the event CD)

SONG LEADER

Suggested Music

Event theme song: "In the Presence of Your People" (pp. 16-17 in this book and in the Reproducibles.pdf file on the event CD)

For this event, songs about God dwelling with us are particularly appropriate. Some suggestions:

- "Dwelling Place" (Tommy Walker)
- "God Himself Is With Us"
- "How Lovely Is Your Dwelling"
- "How Lovely Is Your Dwelling Place" (Matt Redmond)
- "Lord, You Have My Heart" (Martin Smith)

STEP 1: Welcome, Gathering, and Building Community

EVENT COORDINATOR Welcome WE participants as they arrive. Direct people to their tables, using the nametags with Israelite tribes on them (see Supplies and Prep box). Hand out nametags in random order so people don't end up sitting at a table with their own family members. Be sure to accommodate young children or other people who really don't want to be separated from friends or family.

HOST **Begin** the event with a warm welcome. Since this is the first event in this series, set the stage this way:

Welcome, everyone, to this WE event! We're glad that each and every one of you is here. As we all eat together, learn together, and talk together, we'll discover new things about God, our faith, and each other.

In the next five WE events we'll be exploring a building the Bible calls "the tabernacle." The Bible tells us that the tabernacle was a moveable house for God. God told the Israelites exactly how to build it after they left Egypt. It was a big, rectangle-shaped tent surrounded by a tall fence made of woven cloth. Inside the fence and the tent were special furnishings that helped the Israelites worship God and learn how to be his people. It looked something like this:

A/V TECHNICIAN **Project** the PowerPoint image of the tabernacle ("Tabernacle Image" on the event CD). Leave this image up until people are finished eating.

HOST **Continue** as follows:

In these events, we'll see how the tabernacle shows us God's love for his people—back then, and today too—and God's plan to save them and to live with them always. We hope you'll come back for the next four events, because we have lots of special things planned, and you won't want to miss them!

EVENT COORDINATOR

Supplies and Prep for Step 1

- **Room setup.** If you have a small number of tables, set up the room with the tables in a U-shape, and use the empty center space for your "stage" area when you present the drama in Step 2. If you have too many tables for this to work, just set up tables in any configuration that works for you, and reserve an area at the front of the room for a "stage."
- **Table signs and nametags.** It's important that your WE group gets to know each other, so mix things up by assigning participants to different "tribes." Prepare a sign for each table with the name of one of the twelve tribes of Israel written on

it: Asher, Benjamin, Dan, Ephraim, Gad, Issachar, Judah, Manasseh, Naphtali, Reuben, Simeon, and Zebulun. If you have fewer than twelve tables, some tables can represent two tribes. If you have more than twelve tables, you can use some of the tribal names twice. (IMPORTANT NOTE: You'll use these table signs for the next four events too, so keep them in a safe place after this event is over.) Then make nametags with corresponding tribal names to direct people to their seats. Just write the tribal name on the tag—people will write their own names on their nametags when they arrive. TIP: Be sure to match the number of nametags to the number of

HOST **Open** with prayer. Then read Exodus 15:1-13, or arrange in advance for a preteen, teen, or college student to read this passage expressively. Ask them to introduce the reading by saying “This is the song that Moses and Miriam sang shortly after God saved the Israelites from the Egyptians and let them pass through the Red Sea on dry ground.”

HOST **Invite** participants to enjoy the good food together. Point out the conversation tents on each table. Encourage people to use the dinner-table time as follows:

- Introduce themselves to one another.
- Assign one person from each table to serve as table leader for the event.
- Discuss the questions on the conversation tents to kick off the conversation during the meal and to help participants prepare for the learning later.

FOOD/CLEANUP COORDINATOR When people are finished eating (allow 30-45 minutes for a meal or 10-15 minutes for a snack), clear the tables to prepare for table activities.

chairs around the table; if you have eight chairs at the “Asher” table, for example, make eight “Asher” nametags.

- **Room decorations.** For this event tie together six gray helium balloons in a bunch and six red, orange, and yellow helium balloons in a bunch to symbolize the pillars of cloud and fire that God used to lead the Israelites in the desert. Place them near the entrance to your meeting space.
- **Conversation tents.** When you know how many tables you’ll have, print the same number of conversation tents (p. 25 in this book and in the Reproducibles.pdf file on the event CD) onto cardstock. Fold in half where indicated. Place one tent on each table before WE participants arrive.
- **Sign-up sheet** for participation in building the tabernacle furnishings if you’ll be doing a large group build (see p. 10).
- **Optional:** a small model of the tabernacle to use for reference during the five events. You can purchase wooden and plastic models at www.ebibleteacher.com, or search online for “tabernacle model kit.”
- “Tabernacle Image” Power Point from the event CD

Step 2: Learning Experiences for All Ages

ENTER THE STORY

HOST Settle the group down as you invite attendees to enter God’s story. Invite the readers to step up to present the dramatic reading “God Speaks to His People.”

HOST After the reading, invite table groups to take five minutes to share with each other what surprises them most about the story. Encourage them to make sure everyone gets a chance to speak. Then ask table groups to share some of their “surprises” with the larger group.

LIVE INTO THE STORY

HOST Invite someone from each section to come forward to get an activity tray and take it back to their table.

HOST Explain that on the tray the group will find instructions and materials they will need for the next 15 minutes. Give them a 5-minute warning so they’ll know when time is almost up.

Step 3: Reflect and Praise

HOST After the activity, lead the group in prayer, thanking God for his desire to live in and among us and for giving us a visual image to show us how to draw near to him. Thank him for inviting us into this personal relationship.

SONG LEADER Offer praise to God by leading the group in singing the event theme song, “In the Presence of Your People.” If time allows, sing other songs of praise from the list of suggested music at the beginning of this event, or choose your own songs that fit this event’s theme.

HOST Introduce the take-home items that your greeter will hand out to each household before participants leave. Call their attention first to the take-home devotions. Encourage

EVENT COORDINATOR

Supplies and Prep for Step 2

- Make copies of the script “**God Speaks to His People**” (pp. 27-29 in this book and in the Reproducibles.pdf file on the event CD) for each reader and for the A/V technician. Recruit readers in advance, and set a time for them to practice the reading. Make sure your A/V technician practices with the readers so he or she knows when to play the sound effects and project each image from the “Event 1, Step 2, Readers’ Theater” file on the event CD.
- Make a copy of the **cue card** (p. 31 in this book and in the Reproducibles.pdf file on the event CD) for the narrator to use during the reading.
- Set up one activity tray for each table that includes:
 - One set of 16 **Tabernacle Matching Game Cards** (p. 32 in this book and in the Reproducibles.pdf file on the event CD). **IMPORTANT NOTE:** Print **TWO COPIES** of this page to make **ONE SET** of 16 matching cards.
 - One copy of the **Tabernacle Matching Game Key Card** (p. 33 in this book and in the Reproducibles.pdf file on the event CD)
 - One copy of the **Tabernacle Matching Game Instructions** (p. 34 in this book and in the Reproducibles.pdf file on the event CD)

everyone to use this devotional guide at home in the days following this event. Also be sure to point out the “Take It Further” cards.

Other take-home options for this event are listed below; introduce any you are providing:

- **Honey Cake recipe**
- **Build Your Own Tabernacle ideas**
- Households can use the fun-to-color-and-label **tabernacle coloring page** as a visual reminder of God’s desire to dwell among his people.

HOST Ask people to open their hands to receive this blessing from Numbers 6:24-26:

The LORD bless you and keep you;
The LORD make his face shine on you and be gracious to you;
The LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace.

HOST Thank participants for coming and announce the date for the next WE event.

EVENT COORDINATOR Hand out take-home items as people leave.

EVENT COORDINATOR

Supplies and Prep for Step 3

- A copy of the **event theme song**, “In the Presence of Your People” (pp. 16-17 in this book and in the Reproducibles.pdf file on the event CD), for your song leader
- **Event 1 take-home devotional guide** (pp. 37-38 in this book and in the Reproducibles.pdf file on the event CD). Print or copy one per household on colored paper or cardstock. Also make sure your host has a copy to show people at the end of the event.
- **“Take It Further” cards** (p. 39 in this book and in the Reproducibles.pdf file on the event CD). Print or copy one per household on colored paper or cardstock. Also make sure your host has a copy to show people at the end of the event.
- Optional take-home items:
 - **Tabernacle coloring page** (p. 36 in this book and in the Reproducibles.pdf file on the event CD) for each household
 - **Build Your Own Tabernacle ideas** (p. 35 in this book and in the Reproducibles.pdf file on the event CD), one copy per household
 - **Honey Cake recipe** (p. 26 in this book and in the Reproducibles.pdf file on the event CD), one copy per household

we Enter the Tabernacle

You have in your hands an exciting new concept in faith nurture! **we** is a series of fun, easy-to-use intergenerational events that get your whole church together for a rich learning celebration that brings unity to your community.

The events in **we** *Enter the Tabernacle* show how the design of the Old Testament tabernacle shows God's salvation plan, points the way to Jesus Christ, and demonstrates how much God loves us and wants to dwell with us.

The 5 events in this series include:

Event 1: God Lives with Us

Event 2: Sacrifice and Cleansing

Event 3: Enter the Holy Place

Event 4: The Most Holy Place

Event 5: God's Presence in You

This event guide includes:

- Planning and setup tips
- Clear and complete event outlines
- Lists of easy-to-find supplies
- **we** theme song and other music suggestions
- Reproducible pages to print or copy



www.WEcurriculum.org
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