

Have you tried to read through The Bible but can't seem to make it past page 68 before giving up?

If you were to survey most Americans, you'd find that a huge percentage of folks would like to know more about The Bible (*most would even like to read the entire book*) but can't seem to get past the first few chapters.

Let's face it... The Bible can be very difficult to read! The names are sometimes impossible to pronounce. We can't identify with a world and a culture that are so different from ours. We try to read The Bible like it was written by a contemporary author. We want to read it like it's the new Michael Creighton novel. But that's not what it is, at all. And honestly, how many people do you know who have really read the entire Bible anyway?

Truth be told, most of us instinctively want to know more about The Bible - even if we're not "Bible people" or aren't exactly sure what we believe about God. We know that it is the most popular book ever written. We know that there's something in it that has filled holes in the hearts of a zillion people. We know that The Bible is the basis for Christianity's growth from just a dozen people (thousands of years ago) to the millions and millions of people that follow God today.

So, how do we manage to get the whole church to read the whole Bible in a whole year!

Join Us For A Journey Through The Story!

The Story is a book of selections from The Bible, arranged chronologically, that reads like a novel.

Starting on Sunday, September 12, 2021, our community of faith will begin the process of reading this wonderful version of God's Word where there are no traditional chapter names (*Genesis through Revelation* are replaced by *Creation through The End of Time*). There are no chapter or verse numbers. *The Story* reads like a novel.

During this unique 31-week experience, every member of the family hears or reads their own version of *The Story*. Adults are encouraged to read a chapter at home, every week.

We'll also break into individual classes based on age on Sundays to take age-appropriate looks at *The Story*.

On Sunday mornings, all worship messages, music, etc. will be based on this same weekly focus.

We would love to share this journey with you and your family. You are invited to join Portsmouth's First Presbyterian community as we explore God's Word by together reading *The Story* and discover how our story is found in His story!

The beginning of *The Story* at First Presbyterian Church in Portsmouth took place on last Sunday, September 12. We were focused on Chapter #1 (*Creation; The Beginning of Life as We Know It*).

For the remainder of September, we'll focus on Chapter #2 (*God Builds a Nation*) on September 19; and Chapter #3 (*Joseph: From Slave to Deputy Pharaoh*) on September 26. A sheet with worship/study focus for each week is available.

After surveying folks who received a copy of *The Story* from the church (not all 56 who got them - just those with e-mail addresses), there was a bit of confusion; a majority of folks said that having the discussion "any time" was fine. This was good because our sense was that if folks worked during the day, 9A to 5P might not be a good time... Ultimately, an evening seemed like the best time for our discussion/study group to meet. Wednesday seemed like the most popular day but the choir rehearses on Wednesday evenings and that seemed a priority. ***So, we'll meet VIRTUALLY (only) on Thursdays @ 7P.*** We'll start on Thursday, September 16!

Our discussion and study of *The Story* will be made up of two major components. First, we have a limited number of openings available to view the 10 - 20 minute presentations led by Randy Frazee and Max Lucado. These presentations are very well done and allow us to follow our weekly worship focus. You can view these lessons at your leisure (any time 24/7/365). You will, however, need a Study Gateway account which I will provide you (as long as openings are available). You can view the lessons on your phone, tablet, computer, Apple TV, Roku, etc. If you'd like to receive these lessons, please let me know ASAP!

The second component is access to our study which will take place via Zoom (for now). Please let me know if you'd like to participate and I'll make sure you receive a traditional Zoom invitation. Each session should last around 30 minutes (from 7 - 7:30 on Thursday evenings) and will center on a discussion on the weekly lesson (not a quiz), some prayer, etc. You do not have to have viewed the video lesson to participate but at least having read the weekly chapter is highly advisable!

Once again, if you'd like to participate in the discussion or lessons, please let me know ASAP!

Hope to hear from you soon!

Blessings,

Billy (williamtricketts@icloud.com)

THE STORY: TIMELINE

#1 Sept. 12

#2 Sept. 19

#3 Sept. 26

#4 Oct. 3

#5 Oct. 10

#6 Oct. 17

#7 Oct. 24

#8 Oct. 31

#9 Nov. 7

#10 Nov. 14

#11 Nov. 21

Nov. 28 1st Sunday of Advent; Dec. 5 2nd Sunday of Advent; Dec. 12 3rd Sunday of Advent; Dec. 19 4th Sunday of Advent; Dec. 26 1st Sunday of Christmas

#12 Jan. 2

#13 Jan. 9

#14 Jan. 16

#15 Jan. 23

#16 Jan. 30

#17 Feb. 6

#18 Feb. 13

#19 Feb. 20

#20 Feb. 27

Mar. 6 1st Sunday of Lent; Mar. 13 2nd Sunday of Lent; Mar. 20 3rd Sunday of Lent; Mar. 27 4th Sunday of Lent; Apr. 3 5th Sunday of Lent; Apr. 10 Palm Sunday; Apr. 17 Easter

#21 Apr. 24

#22 May 1

#23 May 8

#24 May 15

#25 May 22

#26 May 29

June 5 Pentecost

#27 June 12

#28 June 19

#29 June 26

#30 July 3

#31 July 10