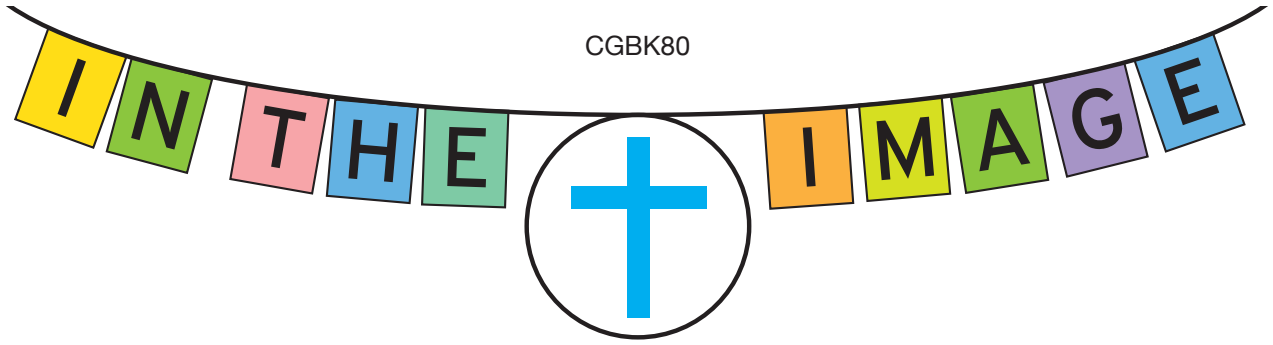


CGBK80



A Music and Arts Faith-Formation Resource

A flexible, creative curriculum for church or home use,
incorporating music, art, nature, play, and worship

by Mark Burrows

Based on the musical *In the Image*

Experience what it means to be created *In the Image* of God
through five fun-filled content modules:



Creative



Seeing the Good



Care for Creation



Community



Rest



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Director's Guide

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About This Material

In May 2020, churches, choir directors, and children's ministry leaders approached a summer of cancelled in-person events - music camps, Vacation Bible School, and summer musicals. Choristers Guild aspired to develop an at-home experience that would nurture the musical and spiritual growth of children and families at home.

With the quick thinking and incredible creativity of Mark Burrows, this resource was curated to meet that need.

Inside this resource, you'll discover fully reproducible material designed to help children (and their families) grow in faith through musical and artistic expression. The content was inspired by Mark's musical for children's choirs, *In the Image* – which explores the story of Creation and helps children wonder what it means to be created *in the image* of God. The musical's imagery, language, and music are used here in new ways to spark creativity, innovation, and conversation.

Five main themes from the musical became the building blocks for five content modules. These modules can be used over the course of a week (one module per day) – or over the course of a month (one module per week). Each module contains the following enrichment activities:

**Bible Beat
Songs
Treasure of Nature
Art Experience
Game
Family Worship**

Through these activities (described later in this Guide), children and families will discover what it means to be created *in the image* of God: embracing their inherent creative abilities, seeing the good in things, taking responsibility to care for creation, creating community, and valuing rest. The music and art expressions in this resource are woven together for a meaningful faith-formation experience.

Using This Resource

The flexibility of this resource gives leaders many options for use.

- Use this as a week-long *at-home* Music & Arts Camp.
- Use this as a week-long *at-home* VBS.
- Use this as a month-long family faith-formation initiative, spanning five weeks in the spring, summer, or fall.
- Incorporate the activity and devotional material into your children’s choir rehearsals (in-person or online).
- Use the modules as a 5-week Sunday School thematic block about Creation.
- Use this material with your choir before producing *In the Image* (the musical) – introducing the theme & music to your children before rehearsals begin.
- Use this material concurrently with *In the Image* rehearsals – providing artistic expression and faith formation as you learn your lines & blocking.
- Use this as a follow-up enrichment experience after performing *In the Image* with your children’s choir.

The five modules are a starting point – a springboard. Though they are fully complete, you might wish to add more activities. We’ve included a **Creativity Bank** for this very purpose. Peruse the art projects, games, and activities in the Creativity Bank and select those you wish to use during your event. Or – simply provide families with their own copy of the Creativity Bank to support continued learning at home.

Planning an At-Home Event

An event hosted at a distance might involve fewer pieces to plan (no venue reservations or lunch volunteers needed), but your planning work is no less important. Here are a few tips for putting together a successful at-home event.

- Schedule your event as you would for an in-person event – avoid holiday weeks and calendar dates when families may be traveling. Check church and community calendars to avoid conflicts with other events involving your primary participant audience.
- Determine the registration procedure. Will you ask families to register online via your church website or an online form?
- Determine any program fees and how they’ll be collected.
- Some good news: families may not need much advance notice for an at-home event. Don’t worry if summer has already begun – just start planning, get the word out, and ask families to share the news with their friends.
- Share news of your event to your local community and neighborhood groups on social media. This type of event may appeal to non-members of your church because they can engage in the material from the comfort of their home. Consider this a great outreach opportunity to your neighbors!

- Decide how you will package and distribute the supplies. Follow local health guidelines for in-person pick-ups.
- Allow plenty of time to package the supplies with care. Pray for the participants and their families as you pack each set of supplies.
- Determine how you will engage your participants during the week and how creations might be shared among your group – as well as with your broader church family. (See the section *Building Community – Connecting and Sharing* for more tips.)

What do I provide participants for an at-home event?

- Share the Parent Guide with each family. This brief guide is designed to provide parents a helpful overview of the activities while cheering them on to find a balanced family rhythm. If parents feel stressed by the task of shepherding kids through this resource, the Parent Guide reassures them they are capable (and creative, too!).
- Be sure each family has access to the five modules. Make hard copies available or distribute the PDFs.
- Share the song MP3 files. Create a private soundcloud playlist for your participants or send the actual audio files via Dropbox, WeTransfer, or another file-sharing method.
- Share the song pages as hard copies or PDFs.
- Consider providing any crafting materials participants will need: the paper supplies, the tangram templates, string, a pack of crayons, balloons, etc. No need for expensive supplies – everything on your supply list can be easily (and inexpensively) found at your local store. A complete list is provided at the end of this Guide.
- Consider providing a printed reference copy of the color wheel and tangram example page – or make these PDFs available to families.
- Provide any Treasure of Nature item that’s not available in your local neighborhood (feathers or acorns, for example).

The purchase of this resource includes the license to reproduce the content and/or distribute the digital audio & document files for your event.

Daily Rhythm

One of the temptations when organizing an event filled with at-home activities is to create a sample schedule for parents to follow or recreate.

Avoid this temptation.

This curriculum is designed to accompany a family’s daily rhythm. A Bible Beat to begin the day with purpose. A simple art project when children and parents are feeling inspired. A nature devotion to share during outdoor play. A game to engage the pre-meal energy. A family worship experience to end the day. And a musical soundtrack to accompany any type of activity.

Adopt a *less-is-more* approach regarding the schedule. Allow breathing room for creativity to flourish naturally. The freedom to determine a rhythm that works for them is a gift to families.

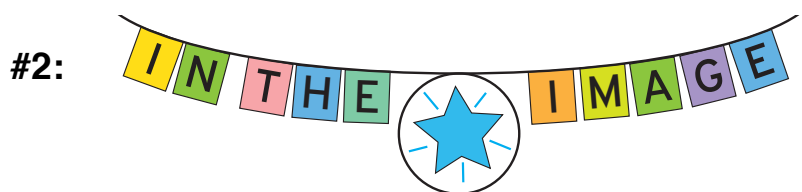
Suggested Sequence

The thematic material in this resource is designed to meet your needs. Present one module per day, one module per week, or customize as your schedule requires. Although we offer a suggested sequence below, you can also customize the module order to best fit your program.



Creative

To be created in the image of a Creator is to be creative. Each of us has the ability to create something beautiful, something meaningful. And real creativity isn't about having the most. It's about doing the most with what you have.



Seeing the Good

After God created the heavens, the earth, and all living things, God saw all that God made, and indeed it was very good. To be created in the image of God is to find the good ...even when it's not easy to see.



Care of Creation

God created people to be earth stewards, to care for God's creation. To be created in the image of God is to respect nature and take responsibility for caring for the earth.



Community

Not just I – but we – are created in God's image. It takes all of us working together to be God's hands, God's heartbeat, God's song in the world.



Rest

After the wonderful work of creating our world, God rested. We are created in the image of God, so we create, we see the good, we care, we connect, and we rest.

Curriculum Overview

This curriculum is a flexible collection of creative and artistic expressions. Here are brief descriptions of the activities included with each module.



Bible Beats

It all begins here – with a meaningful biblical text set to rhythm. The simple Bible Beat rhythm is ideal for a wide variety of ages. Young children are concrete thinkers and this activity not only allows the children to hear the rhythm, but feel it and see it, too. Each of the four Bible Beats works together in a percussion groove, and older children may have fun layering the parts together as the week rolls on.

What do you use to play the Bible Beat? Well, first use voices only – and chant the text in rhythm. Next, add body percussion and ask the children to pat their lap or their chest as they speak in rhythm. For even more fun, add some instruments.

What if we don't have drums at home? A quick lap around the kitchen or garage will result in some handy percussion instruments. Try these out:

- A coffee can
- A 5-gallon bucket
- An empty ice cream pail
- Sandpaper
- A shoe box
- An oatmeal canister
- A cookie sheet
- An empty laundry detergent bottle



Songs

The songs featured in this resource come directly from *In the Image*, Mark's children's musical. This musical features a group of children who wonder what it really means to be created *in the image* of God. Through humorous, earnest exploration, the children discover that being created in the image of God isn't about physical appearance. It's about creativity, faithfulness, responsibility, community, and the ability to find the good in things.

These catchy melodies and meaningful rhymes will provide a wonderful soundtrack for your week. Distribute the audio files to your families and encourage them to play the soundtrack as they play games, create art, and prepare meals together. A song or two is also featured in each family worship experience.



Treasures of Nature

One of the unforeseen side effects of our shelter-in-place/safer-at-home time is how people are connecting more with nature. For many families, outdoor activities are bringing great peace and comfort right now - a walk in the park, a family bike ride, a picnic in the yard, the simple joy of being outdoors! In a time when we're forced to spend so much time interacting *virtually*, reconnecting with nature reminds us all that WE ARE REAL.

A global pandemic is not a good thing. It's just not. And it doesn't mean your faith is weak if you don't see this trial as a "blessing." Full stop. But here's the good news: as children of God, we have a sacred ability to hear whispers of blessing and find moments of meaning, even in the hardest times.

Included here are five simple devotions, each based around a treasure of nature. These devotions can be led by a grownup or an older sibling ("junior counselor"). Consider going outside to share these devotion times.

This is slow time ... breathable time. No need to rush.

Before you say anything, encourage the children to simply hold each object, examine it.

What does it look like?

What does it feel like?

Does it feel the way you expected?

Remind the children to handle each object gently and carefully.

Here are the items you'll use throughout the week:

Feather – Acorn – Stone – Leaf

You may need to purchase one or more of these items from an online craft store, especially the feathers, which you will want to be clean. Consider providing a small box or jar, so everyone can keep their treasures in an easy-to-find place.



Art Experiences

Creating art is a wonderful way to express feelings, capture wonder, and appreciate beauty. The art experiences in this resource don't require an art degree or fancy supplies. They are designed to be intuitive – using what families have on hand to craft something beautiful, something with purpose and meaning.



Games

The games featured in this resource are simple, creative, and fun. With very few items required (if any), these small-group games will help families flex their creative & cooperative muscles – all while reinforcing the themes of the week.



Creating a Sacred Space: Family Worship

During this season of quarantine, we miss people – being in the physical presence of friends, extended family, teachers, neighbors, teams, classes, *choirs*. Something else people seem to be missing are the places where we all gather together. We know God is with us everywhere. And yet our places of worship are special. They are sacred spaces – *set apart* for a special purpose. Great care is taken through art, architecture, lighting, symbolism, music, and more to curate an environment where we can feel genuinely close to God.

Daily family worship experiences in this curriculum follow a familiar rhythm of worship: gathering together, proclaiming God’s Word, responding to God’s Word, and being sent forth. During the week, encourage families to create a special sacred space in or around their home. A place that’s *set apart*.

- It could be a corner of a room or a place near a window that overlooks nature. (Though preferably not a window that overlooks a street with cars going by frequently.)
- It could be an area around a firepit or in the corner of their yard.

As children participate in the art activities and nature experiences, anything tangible that emerges from these activities could be added to the sacred space. They might mark this space with a big blanket where participants sit together. They could also keep a children’s Bible nearby. A cross can be made from sticks fastened with yarn. Consider adding an LED candle (or a wax candle – just be safe).

A more playful (though no less prayerful) option could be using a very large overturned cardboard box. The “ceiling” of the box could be decorated with each day’s Bible story, *a la* the Sistine Chapel.

This sacred space can be utilized well beyond the end of this week. It could be a place where families always go for family prayers, to explore new Bible stories, or where individuals can go for some “alone time” with God. (Jesus did that a LOT.)

Building Community – Connecting and Sharing

Even though we may be creating and learning at home, we can still find ways to build community and share our creations with each other. Consider gathering participants together in a brief Zoom meeting at the beginning or end of the day. This connection point can allow participants to talk about the day’s theme and activities, share their creations, sing the songs, and play the Bible Beat. You might also create a private Facebook group for this event, encouraging participants to post pictures, reflections, or activities their family really enjoyed.

Consider ways to involve your larger congregation in an at-home event. Post blog updates on the church website detailing each day’s theme, share pictures (only with proper permission) of families creating, playing, and worshiping together. Invite your congregation to pray for the participants. Utilize the nature devotions or prayers in your eNews throughout the week.

Supply List

Here are the supplies each participant will need for the five modules.

Art Supplies

- A few 4x11” strips of white poster board or cardstock
- A few pages of white cardstock or paper
- A few white index cards
- Tangram template
- Color wheel
- Tangram example page
- Scissors
- Hole punch
- Length of yarn or ribbon (36-48”)
- Crayons, markers, and/or colored pencils
- Pencil
- Sidewalk chalk

Game Supplies

- Balloons
- Masking tape

Treasures of Nature

- Feather
- Acorn
- Stone
- Leaf

Creative Tips for Packaging/Delivering Supplies

1. Consider packing the supplies in a small bucket for each participant and arranging a *no-contact* doorstep drop or a drive-by supply pick-up at the church. Gather participants in an online Zoom meeting to “unpack” your buckets together. (Bonus: The buckets can be repurposed as rhythm instruments for Bible Beats!)
2. Place each module in a sealed envelope. Imagine the excitement each morning as families open the new day’s adventures!
3. We’ve included all the art files for your use. Using the thematic circle icons, print stickers for the children as a fun surprise.
4. Write a personal note to each participant and include this along with the supplies.

Creativity Bank

Additional activities to inspire creativity, wonder,
and reinforce important Bible concepts

The Art of Limitations

Creativity isn't about having the most. It's about doing the most with what you've got. One of the driving forces of creativity is *limitations*.

Give each person a sheet of white paper and access to colored pencils/crayons/markers. You can also go outside and use a hard surface and sidewalk chalk.

Have everyone divide their sheets into four quadrants / draw four quadrants on your driveway or sidewalk.

In one quadrant, instruct the children to "Draw a picture."

Limitation 1 – In the next quadrant, draw a picture *of your favorite part of Creation*.

Limitation 2 – In the next quadrant, *use only 1 color*.

Limitation 3 – In the next quadrant, *never lift your crayon/marker/chalk off the surface*.

Balancing Act

Give each person an assortment of building blocks. You could also go outside and use landscaping rocks. (Remember to put them back when you're finished.)

Challenge each person to build a structure that is balanced, yet as asymmetrical as possible.

See how high – or how wide – a structure you can build!

Chef of the Day

Choose one family member to be the Chef of the Day. The Chef will be in charge of planning and preparing one family meal (with grownup help, as needed). There's just one creative catch: the Chef needs to incorporate one or more (up to four) food items currently in the home - from the pantry, refrigerator, or cupboards - in their menu creation.

Have all family members work together to choose a number of food items in your home. Write the name of each item on a separate notecard or piece of scratch paper. Put these cards/papers in a shoebox (or something similar).

Invite the Chef to choose one or more cards from the shoebox. These are the food items they must incorporate in the menu. You can add your own guidelines, such as:

The Chef *may/may not* use recipe books or Google for inspiration.

The Chef *may/may not* request a trip to the grocery store for additional items.

The Chef needs to make a *main dish/side/dessert/all of the above*.

All family members can celebrate the Chef by cleaning up together after sharing the meal.

Bon appetit!

Six-Word Autobiography

Give each person a pencil and a notecard. Challenge everyone to write a six-word autobiography. These do not need to be written in complete sentences.

Variation 1 – Have each person write a 10-word biography of a Bible figure.

Variation 2 – Divide into pairs. Have each pair interview each other and write 10-word biographies of one another.

Tone Poem

A tone poem is a musical composition where sounds represent different aspects (characters, actions, moods) of a poem or story.

Choose a Bible story, such as The Creation or Jesus Calms the Storm. Identify the main figures and actions. Invite everyone to come up with body percussion and vocal/mouth sounds to depict the main figures and actions.

Tell the story and invite everyone to provide the sounds at the right times.

Tell the story again, this time *only* through the sounds (no words).

Canvas Art

When canvases go on sale at your local craft store, snag a few along with paint supplies and create colorful art to remind you of this week's themes.

Using your color wheel, identify a pair of complementary colors. Use one of these colors to paint your entire canvas. Fill the surface area so no white is showing.

Next, use your complementary color to paint an image or word you'll remember from this week. It could be one of the day themes (Creative or Rest, for example) or even the overall theme (In the Image). You could paint something you discovered in nature or one of your Treasures of Nature. You can also practice your *pointillism* skills: use cotton swabs to dab dots of paint on the surface of your canvas.

Nature Journal

There are many treasures of nature where you live. Go on a nature walk and look for reminders of God's grace and love.

You can keep a journal, writing down all the reminders of God's love you see in the natural world - right where you live. What brings you joy? Do you see your favorite color in someone's flowerbed? You could even draw pictures to illustrate. And throughout the journal, you could write simple prayers of five words or less:

*Thank you, God!
Wow, God! You are amazing!
I love your Creation, Lord.*

Plant Sunflowers

Growing sunflowers is a wonderful act of care for the environment. Did you know...

- Sunflowers are an excellent food source for pollinators, like bees.
- Sunflowers also attract birds who help balance the pest population in a yard or garden.
- Sunflowers are known as *phytoremediators* – which means they absorb harmful contaminants and metals from the soil. That’s amazing!
- Sunflower seeds are a healthy, tasty snack. Wait until the leaves have turned brown and dry, then rub the sunflower between your hands (over a cookie tray). Find the seeds that dropped and lay them in a single layer to dry out.

Plant your sunflowers in rich soil where there is plentiful sunshine. Sunflowers will thrive in many different climates – even dry climates – just be sure to keep them watered.

Doodle Prompts

All you need for this activity is a paper, a pencil, and some imagination!

Give each artist a blank sheet of paper and a pencil.

Offer a one-word prompt, instructing the artists to draw something related to the word.

Give them a minute or two to draw, then say another word prompt.

Continue with 10-12 word prompts.

Then – it’s time to share! Start from the beginning of your word prompt list, and as you say each word, invite the artists to share what they drew. Enjoy the inventive, creative, and sometimes *hilarious* visual depictions that appear!

Tip: It’s best if the word prompts are descriptive – think of adjectives or adverbs.

Here are a number of word prompts to get you started:

Delicious	Old	Bossy
Fuzzy	Red	Round
Sharp	Lonely	Delicate
Fast	Strong	Thirsty
Tall	Hot	Fragrant
Quiet	Shiny	Difficult
Puzzling	Dangerous	Long

Intermediate Option: Play the game as described above, but challenge each artist to connect their drawings. For example:

Delicious: the artist draws a cake

Fuzzy: she draws a fuzzy koala underneath the cake, holding it up with one paw

Sharp: she draws a pushpin stuck in the cake

Fast: she draws a cheetah sitting at a nearby table, ready to be served the cake

Tall: she draws a very tall top hat atop the cheetah’s head

Sculpt-ionary

It's Pictionary – but with playdough instead of pencils!

First, generate a word list and write each word on a scrap of paper. Here are some great categories for inspiration:

- Animals and sea creatures
- Foods
- Bible stories
- School supplies
- Clothing
- Items in a bathroom
- Items in a kitchen

The first player chooses a word and uses playdough or modeling clay to sculpt the word while the rest of the family tries to guess correctly.

Ten-Minute Playdough

Ingredients

1 cup flour
½ cup salt
2 tsp cream of tartar
1 tbsp cooking oil
1 cup water
Food coloring (as desired)

Instructions

Pour the water into a saucepot and add the food coloring (if desired).
Add the oil to the saucepot and mix.
Combine the dry ingredients (flour, salt, cream of tartar) in a bowl and mix well.
Add the dry ingredients to the saucepot and mix well.
Cook the mixture over low to medium heat, stirring with a wooden spoon.
The liquid mixture will thicken and begin to form a dough.
Once the dough forms, remove from heat and turn the dough ball onto a heat-safe board.
Let it cool for a few minutes, then knead the dough until it's soft and pliable.
Keep your playdough in an air-proof bag, and it will last for months!