



Administrators Guide



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You Are a Leader and Teacher of Teachers of the Faith!

And God has gifted you with a tremendous opportunity. As administrator of a Christian school, you have the chance to serve as an instructional leader of the most important content anyone can ever learn. You can encourage and equip those who daily tell and model for students and parents alike the Good News of Jesus, our Savior—the Good News that He lived, died, and now lives again in order to earn forgiveness for our sins, to present us with the chance to begin all over again with the slate wiped clean, and to give us a happy forever home with Him.

As school administrator, you can set the tone and establish a vision for your school and its identity. You can work to create a safe, secure environment in which each student receives an education of the highest quality. You can show what Jesus means to you in your actions as well as in your words. You can show that you care about each teacher and each student, genuinely and individually, just as Jesus loves and cares for you. You can lead your faculty in developing warm and friendly relationships rooted in God's Word. You can handle disappointments and frustrations in ways that show the power of God's Spirit in your life as you labor to energize others in building a school that is well-respected and valued among those you serve and beyond. You can demonstrate what Jesus' forgiveness means to you in your willingness to also forgive those who have offended you.

We live and teach in a world soured by sin; we are all too familiar with its contaminating effects in the lives of our teachers and students as well as in our own lives. Plus, because the challenges and responsibilities of your role are many, they may at times seem overwhelming. As overseer of all that takes place in your school, you have much to do, and the enemy will place whatever he can in your path to keep you from accomplishing it. More often than not, you will find yourself tempted to ignore important work in order to tend to the tyranny of the urgent. Such is the nature of leading in a Christian school.

But the good news is that no one who follows Jesus need ever feel as if he or she is going it alone. We serve a God “who daily bears us up; God is our salvation” (Psalm 68:19). In His Word, He promises to strengthen and encourage us for the challenges we face. He promises to give our work meaning, bless our efforts, and bring His joy into our lives. As you prepare to begin or continue in your role as school administrator, consider the following suggestions to remain close to God and His Word:

- Schedule daily personal Bible reading and devotional time. God's Spirit strengthens us through His Word.
- Attend worship regularly; partake of the Sacrament often. God nurtures our relationship with Him as well as with other believers as we gather around Word and Sacrament.
- Pray at the beginning of and throughout each day. Pray for your teachers by name. “The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working” (James 5:16).
- Encourage your teachers to plan their religion lessons prayerfully and thoughtfully. You will find your students and their families at various places in their spiritual growth and understanding.
- Also encourage teachers to look for faith applications and connections that can be made throughout the day in every aspect of the curriculum.
- Celebrate successes and ask for and receive forgiveness for failures, trusting in Jesus' power to remove and restore. Remember: “The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; His mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning” (Lamentations 3:22–23).
- Don't try to go it alone, especially during those times when the going gets tough. Seek out the support and encouragement of your pastor, teachers, and staff as well as your students' parents. Work together to build a community dedicated to the mission and philosophy of your Christian school.
- Remember that your teachers and students are influenced at all times by you and by the manner in which you lead; they will learn from your words, actions, and attitudes; they will learn from who you are and Whose you are!

You Are Part of Something Big!

Before Jesus ascended into heaven, He told His disciples, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19–20). Christian schools excel in disciple making. Sometimes they are referred to as “workshops in Christian living,” where discipleship is practiced as lessons are taught, relationships are established, and the issues of everyday life are experienced.

Each lesson in this curriculum emphasizes Christ and the forgiveness, new life, and eternal salvation that are now ours in Him. The lessons will help students understand God’s will for their lives, their sinfulness when measured according to God’s Law, and the strength God offers through His Word to empower us for a new life in Him.

One in Christ— an Overview

Like *Voyages: Exploring God’s Word*, and the other religion curriculums for Lutheran schools preceding it, *One in Christ* is designed to assist those teaching in Christian classrooms so that, through the Word and Spirit of God, students using these materials may

- know God, especially His seeking and forgiving love in Christ;
- respond in faith and grow into Christian maturity;
- see themselves as the reconciled, redeemed children of God and individual members of Christ’s Body, the Church;
- live happily in peace with God, themselves, and their fellow human beings;
- express their joy in worship of God and in loving service to others;
- value all of God’s creative work in His world and the Church;
- witness openly to Christ as the Savior of all people;
- participate actively in God’s mission to the Church and the world;

- live in Christian hope with the blessed assurance of eternal life in heaven through Christ Jesus, our Lord.

Focused on these goals, the *One in Christ* curriculum centers on Christ so that students will have optimal opportunities to grow in their faith and Christian lives. By God’s grace, those teaching in Lutheran schools join in one voice with the writers, editors, marketers, and others who help prepare this curriculum in the sentiment of 1 John 1:3: “That which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.”

God’s Word reminds us that our faith unites us with Christ just as it unites us with one another. Faith in Jesus makes the Christian classroom a unique and wonderful place, different from any other classroom. Jesus Himself has promised, “For where two or three are gathered in My name, there am I among them” (Matthew 18:20). Classrooms dedicated to Jesus look, feel, and sound unlike all other classrooms. *One in Christ* materials not only guide and equip the teacher for helping students learn God’s Word, but they also provide practical, engaging ideas and suggestions for rooting and connecting all that takes place in, and extends from, the classroom, reaching into the other areas of the curriculum as well as onto the playground and playing field, into the home and neighborhood, and ultimately around the world.

With a special emphasis on *Bible literacy* and *discipleship*, materials for grades 1, 2, 4, 6, and 8 present a Bible survey, while those for grades 3, 5, and 7 are organized around a life-application Bible story approach. Popular features of previous curriculums remain, with increased attention given to helping students make real-life connections. In addition, teacher guides for each lesson direct teachers to a Web site that includes updatable features, such as PowerPoint and interactive-whiteboard activities, video clips, and other lesson applications and extensions, such as those that involve and engage the students’ families.

One in Christ materials at all levels have been organized into nine units. Though varying somewhat in length, these units coincide

roughly with the time of year in which they will be taught. Teachers will find ideas and activities to enhance their observance of seasonal events such as Reformation, Thanksgiving, Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter in the lessons taught during the months that coincide with these events. Bulletin boards are provided with each unit.

One in Christ lessons are organized according to the following plan. (You will find additional detail about each grade level available later in this document).

Grade 1	Bible overview (8 two-day lessons per unit; 9 student books, one per unit)
Grade 2	Bible overview (8 two-day lessons per unit; 9 student books, one per unit)
Grade 3	Thematic Bible story approach (108 stories, some taught over two days)
Grade 4	Chronological Bible story approach (108 stories, some taught over two days)
Grade 5	Thematic Bible story approach (100 Bible stories)
Grade 6	Chronological Bible Story approach (100 Bible stories)
Grade 7	Thematic Bible story approach (100 Bible stories)
Grade 8	Chronological Bible story approach (100 stories)

The organizational structure of grades 1, 2, 4, 6, and 8 of One in Christ emphasizes biblical literacy by presenting Bible stories in a chronological sequence. The goal of the materials at these levels is to help students grow in their knowledge and understanding of God's Word and to recognize it as the Means of Grace, the norm and source for Christian teaching, and the source of power and guidance for living the Christian life. Bulletin boards, available for purchase from Concordia Publishing House, are designed to visually reinforce and help students apply unit themes and concepts.

Designed to continue One in Christ's characteristic focus on Bible literacy, material for grades 3,

5, and 7 have been developed to emphasize biblical themes that explore the elements of doctrine commonly referred to as the Six Chief Parts. These consist of the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, Baptism, Confession, and Holy Communion. Taught in the context of Bible stories, these themes are first introduced at the third-grade level and explored again at the fifth- and seventh-grade levels, with a different set of Bible stories taught at each level. The goal of the materials for the thematic years is to help students grow in discipleship as they explore key doctrinal themes and apply them to their lives.

A Note about Baptism

Classrooms in Christian schools often contain a number of students who have not been baptized. Perhaps some of the students' parents have questions and concerns about what your school teaches about Baptism and when, how, and under what circumstances this blessing from God is to be received. Successful teachers of the faith take care not to leave children who have not been baptized with feelings of inadequacy or guilt. But they also do not react by simply avoiding Baptism, especially when the topic flows naturally from lesson discussions. Instead, they stress the clear teachings of God's Word that Baptism welcomes sinners into the family of God, where they receive Jesus' gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation; that God desires Baptism for all people; and that Baptism applies the words and promises of God together with water, which connects with the recipient by faith. Also, they prayerfully look for opportunities to talk with parents of unbaptized children about Baptism. Many children and their families receive the blessings of Holy Baptism each year through the ministry of those teaching in Lutheran schools.

Committing God's Word to Memory

God's Word is His great gift to us and to all people; it shows us who we are, brings us the gift of salvation, and empowers, equips, and directs us in the new life God has given us to live for Him. In short, it tells us why we need Jesus and what it means to know and live in Him. When we commit God's Word to memory, it becomes a part of

us. We keep it in our minds to recall and apply readily without the need for print or the voice of another. Each lesson in One in Christ contains a Bible verse that relates to the themes and applications of that lesson. Key passages that reinforce important scriptural emphases appear again and again throughout the curriculum, so that at times, the memory selection will review and reinforce a passage previously learned. Conscientious teachers of the faith will do more than merely assign verses to be recited as an exercise in rote learning. They will help students to connect the designated verse with both the lesson and its application in the new life God has given us to live for Him by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Reflecting, Discussing, and Applying God's Word

One in Christ materials have been prepared with the goal of replacing academic activities with those that place more emphasis on reflection, discussion, and application. By God's grace and through the working of His Spirit, your students will experience the oneness in Christ that occurs when God's people gather around His Word in times of study, reflection, and prayer. The goal of those who have prepared these lessons is to help make the portion of the day devoted to the study of God's Word unique and distinctive—students' favorite time of the school day.

A Unit Approach

Each of the nine units in the One in Christ curriculum corresponds fairly closely to the nine months of the school year, according to the following scheme.

Unit 1—September

Unit 2—October

Unit 3—November

Unit 4—December

Unit 5—January

Unit 6—February

Unit 7—March

Unit 8—April

Unit 9—May

Check out the One in Christ Web site for supplemental ideas and activities to enhance your

observance of seasonal events such as Reformation, Thanksgiving, Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter.

Teachers will want to pace themselves accordingly, extending some lessons as needed, especially so they can use some of the enrichment ideas in the Lesson Support sections of the guide. (Note: Teachers continually say they can never cover all the material in the guide, so we have purposely cut back on the number of lessons but increased the number of options so that teachers can work at a pace that suits the needs of their individual situations.) The following Teacher Guide features, which are provided in each two-page unit overview, will assist in planning.

Unit Contents: a list of the lesson titles in the unit provides at-a-glance information about the scope and content of the unit. At the close of each unit for grades 3, 5, and 7, the lesson titles may be used to assess student learning. Ask students to write two to three sentences in answer to several of the questions asked by these titles.

Unit Theme: summarizes the main theme of the unit while also providing helpful suggestions for emphasizing, applying, and extending unit concepts.

Unit Worship: provides suggestions for relating the opening devotions with the unit theme. Music suggestions in the curriculum refer to the *Lutheran Service Book (LSB)*, *Little Ones Sing Praise (LOSP)*, *Songs Kids Love to Sing (SKLS)*, and *Songs Kids Love to Sing 2 (SKLS2)*. At least one hymn is suggested for each session. The accompanying CDs (with the same names as the songbooks) that are available for purchase provide music for each song. Suggestions are occasionally made for *All God's People Sing! (AGPS)*, which has an accompanying CD set called *Jesus' People Sing (JPS)*. Of course, other hymns and songs can also be included that appropriately fit the lesson theme and give glory to God alone!

Unit Resources: gives suggestions or reminders about the curriculum Web site and other resources that can enlighten and enrich students' learning. Suggestions may also be made

about other related Concordia Publishing House (CPH) products.

Unit Bulletin Board: A unique bulletin board has been designed for each of the nine units at each grade level. These are available for purchase from CPH. This section explains how to construct and display the bulletin board. Information in this section also tells how to use the bulletin board to involve students and extend lesson applications.

Unit Mission Story: God’s Kingdom Is Growing! True stories from around the world will be featured monthly in some levels to specifically show the spread of the Gospel or the projects of human care and relief that The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is developing. Read these stories to your class. Occasionally, a picture will also be available to project on a screen (check the Unit Activities section on the Web site).

Lesson Overview Teacher Guide

All lessons in *One in Christ* follow the same easy-to-teach presentation provided over either four or six pages, depending on the level. By God’s grace, each lesson (1) confronts learners with the Law, showing human sin and the need for a Savior; (2) leads learners to see God’s grace in sending Jesus to redeem us all from sin, death, and the power of the devil; and (3) encourages learners as they daily live in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit. You will want to use the Teacher Guide together with the Web site or the *Teacher Resource Book*. These resources provide reproducible activity sheets together with a host of ideas, activities, and other resources to assist in teaching the faith.

The first page of every lesson in the Teacher Guide begins with a section called *Background*. This provides additional information for the teacher’s own growth and development, while also giving high-interest facts that may be helpful in presenting and discussing the lesson.

A special feature is the classroom devotion, which can be read to the class. The life-application stories always have a direct relation to the

day’s theme and can be used as introductions to the lesson itself.

A long sidebar always lists key information for your preparations for the lesson, including the *Central Truth*, which is a statement that provides the main theme of the lesson. Each lesson also has stated *Objectives*. As you review these statements, keep in mind the importance of including Law (God’s expectations of us, which remind us of our sinfulness), Gospel (what God has done for us in Christ Jesus to restore us to Himself), and our response (how we respond to the Gospel in the new life God empowers us to live). Teachers may choose to read these statements to students at the beginning of the lesson or refer to them at the lesson’s conclusion. Research suggests that students are more likely to achieve lesson objectives that are clearly identified for them.

There is also a *Materials* list noting items needed to teach the lesson. *The Basics* (used in each lesson in most grades) include the Student Book, an ESV Bible, and a pencil. The *Bible Prep* list (used in most grades) is very important. It includes the Bible references students will need throughout the lesson. Teachers may post these verses on the board in advance so students can bookmark them before school. This will make the lesson flow more efficiently and will also “level the playing field” so as not to single out students unfamiliar with using the Bible.

The Lesson Plan

One in Christ lessons make use of various technologies to achieve lesson objectives. Be sure to check out the Web Resources accompanying each lesson to access interactive whiteboard activities, PowerPoint presentations, video segments, and other resources. Included on the second and third pages of each Teacher Guide is a reduction of the two Student Pages and the reproducible sheet, each with answers to questions written in. Teachers will find a lot of the questions and directions given in the Teacher Guide rather than in the Student Book because this series has an emphasis on group discussion and (at most levels) group work. Please note that the Gospel is identified **through the use of red ink** in the Teacher Guide as a reminder to make sure stu-

dents receive a clear presentation of the Gospel in the teaching of the lesson. The Student Book is not meant to be a workbook where you assign pages; instead, students will use these pages to respond to and record group interactions.

All lessons follow the same easy-to-teach format of three distinct parts: “Into the Lesson,” “Into the Word,” and “Into Our Lives.” The “Into the Lesson” section is designed to capture students’ interest and to delve into the lesson concepts. The “Into the Word” section provides the Bible story or Bible study that supports the theme of the lesson. Finally, the “Into Our Lives” section encourages students to react or respond to and apply the concepts they have learned. At least one reproducible page is designed for each lesson and can be downloaded from the Web site (it is also repeated in the *Teacher Resource Book*).

Each lesson in One in Christ includes a portion of God’s Word that connects with the theme or application of the lesson. Memorization is a time-honored way of helping believers carry God’s Word with them into their identity, into their day, and into their lives. Sometimes referred to as “learning by heart,” thorough memorization helps learners internalize God’s Word. In this way, the Holy Spirit may continually work through that Word, changing the learner’s heart as he or she calls to mind the words that have been learned. Knowing God’s Word by heart makes it possible for us to carry it with us for handy reflection and application without the need to reference paper or screen.

The last page of each lesson is called “Lesson Support.” This page includes a variety of articles, ideas, teaching tips, lesson extensions, and enrichments. The “Lesson Support” activities may be used to expand and enrich the concepts taught or to carry the lesson theme into other curricular areas throughout the day. Topics include “Working in Groups” (e.g., small- or large-group options), “Curriculum Connections” (science, math, social studies, performing arts, visual arts, physical education, health, language arts), “Using Technology,” “Teacher Tips” (e.g., teacher training, faith building, reflection, inspiration, encouragement, and discipleship), “Reaching Every Child” (e.g., students with physical, behavioral, developmental, learning

challenges; those with limited Bible background or those ready for more in-depth details; students of various learning styles; those who come from other cultural backgrounds); “Celebrating Growth” (e.g., what to add to a portfolio, what to individually conference about or include in a journal); “Searching Further” (e.g., projects, extending the concept over a longer duration, research); “Just for Fun” (e.g., games, snacks, literature connections, sports connections); “Bringing It Home”; “Critical Thinking”; “Faith in Action” (e.g., witnessing/sharing the faith, stewardship, etiquette, the Church today); and “Hands to Serve” (service project ideas). You will find CPH’s Concordia Curriculum Guide series a valuable resource for a host of additional ideas and suggestions for making faith connections in teaching.

Teachers will find more than enough lesson material for the time usually allotted for the teaching of religion. They will not want to attempt to teach everything. The goal is that, with repeated teaching of the lessons during each successive year, teachers will continue to find additional activities and ideas that they can incorporate into the lessons to keep their teaching fresh, interesting, and engaging.

Student Book

Each level of One in Christ will consist of individual one- or two-day lessons, depending on the level. Two facing pages have been dedicated to each lesson in the Student Book. These pages are also reproduced in the Teacher Guide, with answers provided for easy teacher reference. The One in Christ emphasis on God’s Word and discipleship is readily apparent upon a quick review of these pages. All studies of God’s Word, life-related activities, and memory verses have been chosen and included with the overall goal of helping students learn more about God’s love for them in Jesus Christ.

Web Site/Teacher Resource Book

For the first time, Concordia Publishing House is supporting its religion curriculum with electronic resources that may be accessed through our One in Christ Web site. Repro-