

SUNews

An inside view of
Scripture Union

Model and Encourage

Dinnertime for my family is the one time during the day when everyone sets aside what they are doing to be together. Admittedly, it is becoming harder as my children grow older and juggle work and sports schedules. But whenever possible, we gather—together. My son and daughter, who spent their first years as orphans in DR Congo, know what it is to be hungry. They appreciate the gift of good and nourishing food, and it is a happy time to share with them. Many times, our conversation will turn to God—how we see him present in our days, what a passage of Scripture might mean for us, or how to gain his perspective on our concerns.

Recently I discovered a study that was publishing in the *Journal of Family Psychology*. It found that adolescents who reported reading the Bible and praying with their families experienced better mental health that included lower levels of depression and anxiety than those in families that did not. Engaging the children and teens in your life with God's Word is critically important. As I've share previously, mental health hotlines experienced a 40% increase in emails and calls over the last two and a half years; the vast majority of these connections have been with youth.

Scripture Union is addressing this challenge by creating new resources that will equip families to engage together in God's Word. We have been encouraged by the feedback received from families who used our *God's Promise Kept* Advent Kit.

Our new *Footsteps of Jesus: A Lenten Journey* for Families Kit is designed to help families develop a daily practice of reading and prayer as they walk together with Jesus in his journey to the cross and on to the resurrection. If there are no children in your home, consider encouraging a young family you know to take this journey. Then join them in the dialogue. You have a key role to play, too. Barna reports that young people who have a sense of belonging to a community of believers, and who have supportive relationships with at least five adults who model and encourage faith, are more likely to walk in faith into adulthood. Your voice matters to today's youth!



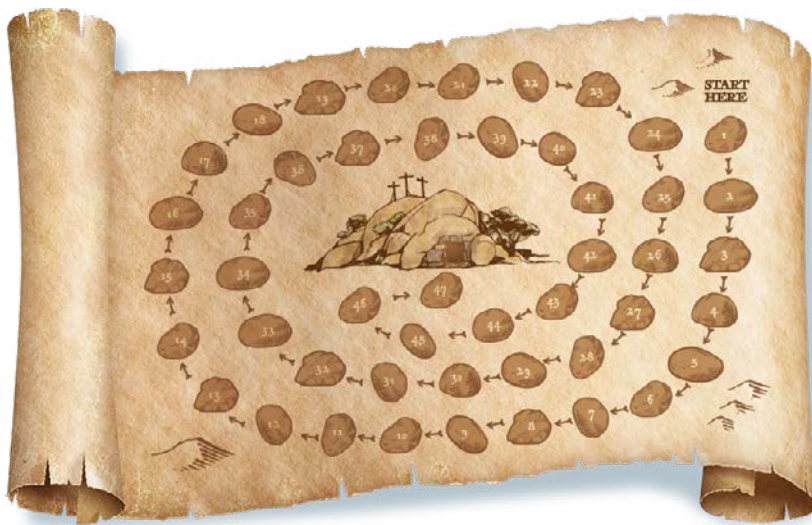
My prayer is that your conversations will be sweet and memorable—even life-changing. And on Easter, may you find even greater joy as you celebrate Christ's resurrection!



Every blessing,
Gail A. Martin, *President, Scripture Union*

Engage this Easter with the Hope of the Gospel

Scripture Union is offering a variety of new resources for children and families during the upcoming Lenten and Easter season. Our goal is to offer opportunities for children to experience God's love, come to trust in Jesus, and to grow in their faith, by connecting with God through daily Bible reading and prayer. Since children's faith grows and thrives best when families read the Bible together, SU's new Lenten Journey is a perfect opportunity for engagement. The Guardians of Ancora Easter Comic and Let's Discover Jesus gift set make perfect gifts for children during the Easter season. Reading SU's Lenten Journal is a perfect way for adults to journey through the season.



Footsteps of Jesus: A Lenten Journey for the Family

Families can journey with Jesus from Ash Wednesday to Easter and the empty tomb with our new *Footsteps of Jesus* Lenten Kit. The kit includes 47 eggs with daily reflections inside, "footstep" stickers, and a map to put the stickers on each day. Each week, there is a day for families to review together and work on a simple activity in response to what Scripture has taught them. Purchase for your own family or for families in your church. Go to our store to order and see the options available. Choose the one best suited for your family's needs.

Let's Discover Jesus gift set! Perfect for Sunday School or Easter baskets

Each kit includes a *Who is Jesus?* foldout (containing Scripture, fun puzzles, and activities), colored pencils, magnifying glass, bookmark made for children with guidance for studying God's Word, and a small pack of (preservative free) fruit snacks. There are 2 different gift sets: grades K-2 and grades 3-5.

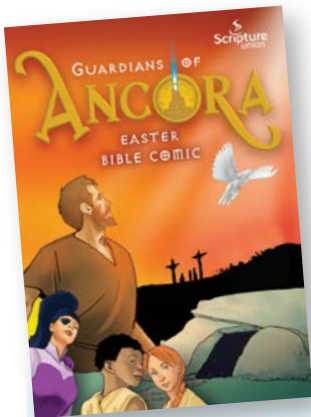
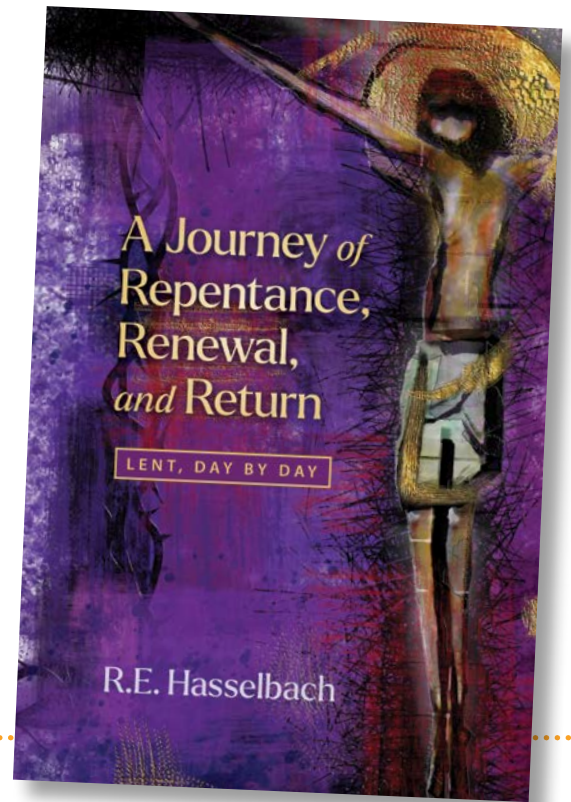


All of these great resources can be ordered online at store.scriptureunionresources.com/LentEaster

A Journey of Repentance, Renewal, and Return by SU Board member Richard Hasselbach

Lent is about repentance, change, and starting over. It's about second chances. *A Journey of Repentance Renewal* offers a guide for those seeking spiritual growth during Lent. Beginning on Ash Wednesday and continuing each day through Resurrection Sunday, author Richard Hasselbach offers special scripture readings, a reflection, a prayer, actionable and practical activities, and a space for a prayer journal and notes to help Christians prepare for Easter. Rooted in the word of God, *A Journey of Repentance, Renewal, and Return* seeks to bring you closer to God, encouraging you to change the way you live. Day by day through Lent, it invites you to live more faithfully as disciples of Christ, trusting in his love and radiating it toward others.

Order your copy today at
store.scriptureunionresources.com/LentEaster



Guardians of Ancora Easter Comic & FREE award-winning App

Encourage children to download the free award-winning *Guardians of Ancora* app. In this amazing virtual world, Bible stories come alive. The characters from the app come alive in our Guardians of Ancora Easter comic where they rediscover the Easter story.

App available for free on the iPhone App store, Google Play and Amazon App store.
Comics can be purchased at store.scriptureunionresources.com/LentEaster



Lamp Award 2022



The Scripture Union Lamp Award is given by the SU-USA Board of Directors to individuals for faithful and sacrificial effort to advance the cause of Bible engagement in the United States.

In October of 2022, **Betty Purchase** was recognized with the Lamp Award for her contributions to SU. Betty first heard about Scripture Union when she was working as the Director of Youth Ministry, Camping and Conferencing for the American Baptist Churches, in around 1995. *"I received a flier for a Youth Conference at Eastern University, with speakers who I really wanted to hear,"* she explained. But as she'd never heard of Scripture Union and wasn't sure what to expect, she went home and asked her pastor husband what he knew about SU.

Reflecting on the organization's strengths she said, *"Discipleship has been of extreme importance to me. One of the appeals of SU was that, as a child, my parents became followers of Christ and tried to do 'what was right', however, no one had ever discipled them. Scripture Union became the help I needed to focus our family."*

Betty served on the Scripture Union-USA Board of Directors for a span of 35+ years. She also served as Chair of the Americas Region Council and as a member of the SU Global Council. She continues to serve the ministry of Scripture Union through faithful and focused prayer.



Youth Training Event in New York City

This past fall we welcomed Steve Meeker, Director of Leadership Lab International, to the SU-USA team. Steve serves this global training arm of Scripture Union International and has been allocated to serve the US movement for 20% of his time; it has been a tremendous blessing. In partnership with churches in the New York City area, Steve is helping with a training program for mentors and teen leaders. This time of intentional discipleship will enable participants to serve in SU-resourced ministries within their church community and beyond.



IN MEMORIAM:

BONNIE MILLER, Board Member

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the loss in 2022 of Bonnie Miller, a beloved board member and member of our SU community.

Bonnie, a retired art teacher from Lewes, Delaware, dedicated much of her life to serving others through beach ministry in Fenwick Island, Delaware. Using Scripture Union's SuperKids® materials, she touched the lives of countless children and families, sharing the love of God with all who crossed her path.

In addition to her work in ministry, Bonnie also served faithfully on the US Board of Directors, bringing her unique insights and passion for children's ministry to bear in important discussions. She will be deeply missed by all who knew her.