

# GREAT BIG beautiful WORLD

## Director Guide

Portions of this work copyright © 2021 The Pastoral Center / PastoralCenter.com. Photos not otherwise credited are from Getty Images. Bible memory verse taken from the *Good News Translation in Today's English Version: Second Edition*, a translation approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Copyright © 1992 by American Bible Society. Used by Permission. Adapted and reprinted with permission from Great Big Beautiful World. © 2020 MennoMedia. Inc., Harrisonburg, VA 22803. All rights reserved. *Director Guide* credits: Joyce Peachey Lind, writer; Chrissie Walls, Joan L. Daggett, and Rachel Nussbaum Eby, editors; Reuben Graham, senior designer.



**Growing Up  
Catholic**  
A ministry of The Pastoral Center

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## Catch the Vision

Introduction .....	3
Goals.....	3
Children’s Faith Formation .....	4
Creation Care.....	5
Bible Outline.....	7
Bible Memory .....	7
Bible Background Essays .....	8–12
Daily Schedule.....	13
Overview.....	14–15
Early Childhood Overview.....	16
Offering Project.....	17

## Get Ready

Ordering Information.....	18
Electronic Files.....	19
Director’s Checklist .....	20–21
Staff Overview .....	22
Leader Assignment Cards.....	23–25
Volunteer Needs.....	26
Orientation for Staff and Volunteers .....	27
Publicity and Outreach.....	28
Dedication Service.....	29
Registration.....	29
Decorating .....	30–31
Setting Up .....	32

## During VBS and Beyond

Tips for the First Day .....	33
Record Keeping.....	33
Safety Tips.....	34
First Aid .....	34
Discipline Tips.....	35
Snacks.....	36–37
Invite Children to Grow in Faith.....	38
Invite Families to Grow in Faith.....	39
“Creation Celebration” Closing Program.....	39
After VBS .....	40
Adaptations for a Midweek Program .....	41
Adaptations for a Weekend Retreat.....	42
Evaluation Form .....	43

# Welcome to **GREAT BIG beautiful WORLD**

## Introduction

**G**reat Big Beautiful World is a one-week Vacation Bible School (VBS) curriculum that embraces Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si* and our call to care for our common home. It begins with the creation story in Genesis 2 and includes psalms, stories of Jesus, and the vision of a new heaven and new earth in Revelation. This comprehensive look at the biblical story reveals God's deep love for all of creation, including each child. *Great Big Beautiful World* invites children to see the ways God cares for the earth and challenges them to be part of caring for and preserving the created world.

Each day starts with relationship-building, joint worship, music, prayer, and a dramatic presentation of the Bible story. This is a time to SOW seeds of friendship, joy, generosity, and wisdom. These seeds will GROW as children explore, create, play, and learn about God's story at three response stations. In closing worship, children will be challenged to GO out into the world to care for the beautiful world God made.

## Goals

- Enjoy the beauty and wonder of creation together.
- Invite children to love God the Creator and follow in the way of Jesus.
- Encourage children to notice the ways that we impact the natural world through our choices and actions.
- Challenge children and families to join God in caring for all of creation.

This curriculum provides everything you need to implement a successful VBS program, no matter your location, size, or budget. This guide gives an overview of all aspects of the curriculum. Refer to the individual leader guides and the electronic files for detailed information about each area. Choose activities and make any necessary adaptations that will work best for the children in your program.

Caring for God's *Great Big Beautiful World* is an amazing privilege! VBS is a wonderful way to inspire children and families to enjoy, explore, and protect the natural world, as Pope Francis calls us to do in his encyclical *Laudato Si'*. There is so much to discover! We're so glad you've joined us!

# CHILDREN'S FAITH FORMATION

We believe that faith formation is a lifelong process of developing a relationship with God. This relationship is nurtured within family and faith communities. Intentional faith formation experiences, such as VBS, help children grow in their understanding of God's love for them. This curriculum recognizes that the faith of children often grows quietly, in ways that are not readily seen, as children take in and ponder the meaning of biblical stories.

Here are the key elements of faith formation found in *Great Big Beautiful World*:

- **Relationship building:** As children arrive at VBS each day, Small Group Leaders guide children in activities designed to build community and create a feeling of belonging.
- **Gathered worship:** Children of all ages gather to sing, pray, and watch a dramatic presentation of the Bible story.
- **Spiritual practices:** Spiritual practices take place each day, which includes music, Bible memorization, and different ways of praying.
- **Centrality of the Bible story:** The Bible story is shared and explored in multiple ways each day—through drama, scripture memorization, hands-on activities, music, full-body movement, writing, art, and reflection.
- **Wondering questions:** Children are invited to reflect on the Bible stories using open-ended wondering questions. These questions show a respect for children's interpretations and their ideas.
- **Discovery-based learning:** Activities in the **GROW** response stations promote creative, discovery-based learning.
- **Child-centered approach:** Activities are child-centered and attend to individual learning styles. The curriculum materials anticipate the diversity of needs that children have.
- **Invitation to grow in faith:** Children are challenged to love God, follow Jesus, and take action that demonstrates care for others and for the world. Along the way they will be growing into the spiritual call to protect the natural world God has blessed us with. See page 38 of this guide for more information.

# CREATION CARE

This VBS theme is inspired by and rooted in the encyclical released by Pope Francis in 2015: *Laudato Si'* (*On Care for Our Common Home*). In it, the Holy Father calls for education in creation care and ecological conversion among all Christians. In 2021, the Vatican announced the Laudato Si' Action Platform, a coordinated effort to mobilize Catholics around the world to address challenges related to creation care.

While this VBS program is a wonderful start, the challenge calls for parish efforts beyond a single week and an audience beyond elementary-aged children. Our hope is that *Great Big Beautiful World* will serve as a springboard for creation care activity across your parish. As you begin your planning, have a conversation with *other leaders* in your parish about how you can make a long-term commitment to ecological conversion and action, and how you can begin to engage parishioners of all ages. Read on for ideas and information on practical tools that will help you in this effort. Our website [CatholicCreationCare.com](http://CatholicCreationCare.com) can serve as your home base for planning your parish effort.

## Laudato Si'

*Laudato Si'* a wide-ranging document, addressed to the universal Catholic Church and “all men and women of good will.” In it, Pope Francis asks us to look at all of creation—including people—and address a crisis of mistreatment, destruction of the environment, and neglect of the poor and powerless. He argues that living our vocation as caretakers of creation is “not an optional or secondary” part of being Christian. He lays out many ways that all of us, young and old, can work towards better appreciating and caring for all of creation, the immeasurable gift from God given for all of us.

This VBS is a fantastic way for kids to actively learn about and participate in our role as stewards of God’s great, big, beautiful world. Throughout the VBS materials, references to the encyclical are noted by the initials *LS* followed by the paragraph number in the original document (e.g. *LS* #60).

The Pastoral Center sells a variety of tools to help adults break open and understand the encyclical, including a Powerpoint presentation (English & Spanish), group reading guides (with summaries), as well as the encyclical itself.



## Action Platform & Planning

The Laudato Si' Action platform ([LaudatoSiActionPlatform.org](http://LaudatoSiActionPlatform.org)) was developed by the Vatican’s Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development as a resource for families, parishes, dioceses, religious communities, educational institutions, healthcare institutions, businesses, and other organizations. We encourage you to explore it and pledge your commitment to the identified goals.

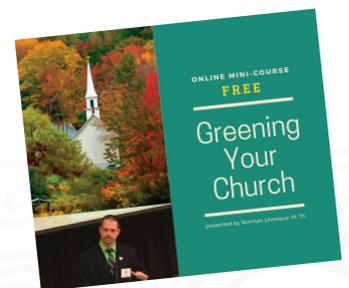
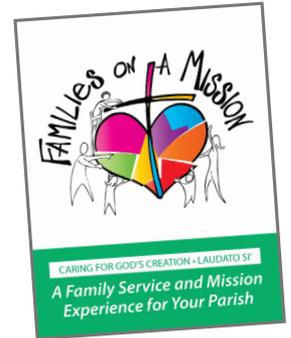
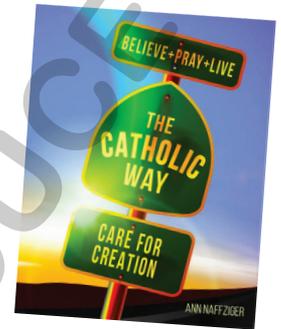
We have created the site [CatholicCreationCare.com](http://CatholicCreationCare.com) especially to help parishes respond to *Laudato Si'*. It offers practical suggestions for how to get started and sustain an effort to engage parishioners of all ages. It goes into greater detail regarding the ideas in this section.

The Pastoral Center offers a variety of leader resources, including a free “Greening Your Church” Video Mini-Course, a deeper “Developing Creation Care Ministry” Video Course, and an “Open Hearts, Open Minds” guide for working together as a parish even when some disagree.

# Coordinated Creation Care Formation

The following table includes ideas for getting started teaching creation care and putting it into practice across your parish.

AUDIENCE	PURPOSE	ACTIVITIES/RESOURCES
ADULTS & YOUTH	Introduce	Host one or two large group introductory events on Laudato Si' and a Catholic perspective on creation care. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Laudato Si' Powerpoint &amp; Talking Points (English and Spanish)"</li> <li>• The Catholic Way: Care for Creation (Sessions &amp; Handouts)</li> </ul>
	Learn & share	Host a series of small group faith-sharing events. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Laudato Si' / On Care for Our Common Home (original document)</li> <li>• On Care for Our Common Home Group Reading Guide</li> <li>• Reading, Praying, Living Pope Francis's Laudato Si'</li> </ul>
FAMILIES	Serve	Mobilize families on a weekend creation care service and mission experience, including faith formation and reflection. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Families on a Mission: Creation Care theme</li> </ul>
	Learn & share	Send home tools to coach parents to engage their children. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation Care on the Run: Handouts for Busy Parents</li> <li>• Help My Child to Know the Saints: Creation 3-Pack</li> </ul>
YOUTH	Learn & share	Hold six or seven youth ministry events on creation care. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In Real Life: Keeping the Garden: A Faith Response to God's Creation</li> </ul>
CHILDREN	Learn & share	Provide ongoing catechetical opportunities to deepen their understanding of creation care. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LearningCycles: Let There Be Light: Creative Activities for Cultivating Gratitude and Care for Creation</li> <li>• Teaching Kids to Care for God's Creation: Reflections, Activities and Prayers for Catechists and Families</li> <li>• The Faithful Citizen: How to Teach Children about Faith and Public Policy</li> <li>...and many other options</li> </ul>
LEADERS	Plan, coordinate, and lead	Learn about creation care leadership. form a creation care team, and begin coordinating parish-wide efforts. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greening Your Church Video Mini-Course: Ten Proven Steps to Inspire Your Faith Community Towards Sustainability</li> <li>• Developing Creation Care Ministry Video Course</li> <li>• Open Hearts, Open Minds: Working together on Creation Care even when some disagree</li> </ul>
ALL AGES	Take action	Nudge parishioners to take an action step every week. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation Care Tips: Weekly Prompts to Care for Our Common Home for bulletins, emails, or social media</li> </ul>



# VBS OUTLINE

<p><b>DAY 1</b> <b>God Creates</b></p>	<p><b>Text:</b> Genesis 2:4b–23 <b>Laudato Si':</b> #62-69, 75 <b>Seed of Faith:</b> God created a beautiful world.</p>	<p><b>Summary:</b> From the dust, God formed and breathed life into a person. Then God made every tree and a river that flowed from Eden. God planted a garden in Eden as a home for all created things. God gave instructions to care for the garden and to eat the fruit from every tree except the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. God made all the animals and brought them to the person to be named. While the man slept, God took one of his ribs and created a woman as a helper and companion.</p>
<p><b>DAY 2</b> <b>God Tends the Earth</b></p>	<p><b>Text:</b> Psalm 104:10–30 <b>Laudato Si':</b> #10-12, 72, 76-92 <b>Seed of Faith:</b> God cares for all creation.</p>	<p><b>Summary:</b> The psalmist praised God for an amazing world where birds sing in trees, grass grows for cattle, human beings harvest food from the earth, mountain goats live in high mountains, rabbits hide safely among rocks, and young lions roar. Innumerable creatures, large and small, live in the seas. God sends water for all creatures and makes moon and sun to mark the seasons and the days. All things look to God for life and food. "When we can see God reflected in all that exists, our hearts are moved to praise."</p>
<p><b>DAY 3</b> <b>God's Kingdom Is Like a Seed</b></p>	<p><b>Text:</b> Mark 4:26–32 <b>Laudato Si':</b> #96-100 <b>Seed of Faith:</b> We are part of God's growing kingdom.</p>	<p><b>Summary:</b> Jesus told two parables about God's kingdom. The kingdom is as if someone scatters seed. The seed grows, without the farmer understanding how. The earth does its work—stalk first, then head, and grain. The farmer harvests the grain when it is ripe. The kingdom is also like a tiny mustard seed. It becomes the greatest of all shrubs with large branches where birds can safely nest in its shade.</p>
<p><b>DAY 4</b> <b>We Are Like Trees</b></p>	<p><b>Text:</b> Psalm 52:8–9; Psalm 92:12–15; Jeremiah 17:7–8 <b>Laudato Si':</b> #72-73, 84-88, 213, 237 <b>Seed of Faith:</b> We can trust in God's love.</p>	<p><b>Summary:</b> Those who trust in God are like trees planted by water, sending out roots by a stream. They aren't afraid of heat or drought. They never cease to bear fruit. The psalmists wrote of being like a tree, trusting in the steadfast love of God always. The righteous flourish, producing fruit all their days.</p>
<p><b>DAY 5</b> <b>A New Creation</b></p>	<p><b>Text:</b> Revelation 21:1–4; 22:1–5 <b>Laudato Si':</b> #100, 209-215, 243-245 <b>Seed of Faith:</b> God will make all things new.</p>	<p><b>Summary:</b> In John's vision, there is a new heaven and a new earth. God will live among people, and death and pain will be no more. The angel showed John the river of the water of life. The Tree of Life is near the river, producing twelve kinds of fruit each month. The leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. The people of God will see God's face. God will be their light and they will reign forever.</p>

## Bible Memory

The Bible memory passage for grades K–5 is introduced during SOW (opening worship) using PowerPoint slides and motions. It is then reinforced during the Dig In response station. Early Childhood (preschool) children will learn the verse during their group worship time.

### Grades K–5:

I trust in God's constant love  
forever and ever.  
I will always thank you, God,  
for what you have done;  
in the presence of your people  
I will proclaim that you  
are good.  
—Psalm 52:8b-9 (GNT)

### Early Childhood:

I trust in God's constant love  
forever and ever.  
—Psalm 52:8b (GNT)

# DAY 1

# GOD CREATES

**Scripture Text:** Genesis 2:4b–23

**Laudato Si':** #62-69, 75

**Seed of Faith:** God created a beautiful world.

## Story Summary:

From the dust, God formed and breathed life into a person. Then God made every tree and a river that flowed from Eden. God planted a garden in Eden as a home for all created things. God gave instructions to care for the garden and to eat the fruit from every tree except the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. God made all the animals and brought them to the person to be named. While the man slept, God took one of his ribs and created a woman as a helper and companion.

## Bible Essay:

As we prepare to share God's *Great Big Beautiful World* with children, we begin at the very beginning—in the book of Genesis. We are perhaps more familiar with the creation story from Genesis 1, where God speaks creation into being and pronounces it good, but we have chosen to focus on the second account of creation in Genesis 2. Here, we see a more intimate view of God's handiwork.

God's hands get dirty in this creation story! God forms a human being out of the dirt and breathes life into him. God creates trees and plants, and then rivers of water to nourish them. God plants a garden in Eden to be a home for the man and instructs him “to till it and keep it,” not to “dominate and subdue” it as some have wrongly interpreted before (*LS* #66-67). God invites the man to join in the creative process and gives him the fruit of all the trees—except for the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

All is not good in this story, for God sees that the man is alone. God creates animals and brings them to the man to name, but none among these is a suitable partner for the man. So God creates a woman from a rib taken from the man's side. The man and woman live together in the garden, caring for and enjoying God's beautiful world.

Children can easily relate to a God who digs in the dirt, forming animals and people. They can imagine kneeling beside God, getting their hands dirty, and squealing with delight at what they create. Like a loving parent, God provides a safe and comfortable home for the man and woman and attends to their needs. As you dig into this story with children, help them to notice the many good things in this beautiful world that God has created.

Children are typically on the receiving end of caregiving. Parents, teachers, trusted adults, and extended family members care for children's daily needs. This story invites children to consider how *they* can become caregivers for creation. Just like the first person in the garden, we too have a responsibility to tend to the world God made (*LS* #68-69).

## DAY 2

# GOD TENDS THE EARTH

**Scripture Text:** Psalm 104:10–30

**Laudato Si':** #10-12, 72, 76-92

**Seed of Faith:** God cares for all creation.

### Story Summary:

The psalmist praised God for an amazing world where birds sing in trees, grass grows for cattle, human beings harvest food from the earth, mountain goats live in high mountains, rabbits hide safely among rocks, and young lions roar. Innumerable creatures, large and small, live in the seas. God sends water for all creatures and makes the moon and sun to mark the seasons and the days. All things look to God for life and food.

### Bible Essay:

Birds, goats, rabbits, lions, and sea creatures come to life in the vivid word scenes painted by the writer of Psalm 104. It is as if all of creation is writing a letter to God—a letter of praise and thanksgiving for the beautiful world God made and continues to nurture! (*LS #72*)

According to this writer, creation did not end in Genesis 2; it continues even today. We see God watering the earth, causing grass and plants to grow to feed the animals and people, providing places for shelter, and marking the seasons. It is this important idea that the psalmist wants to communicate—creation continues, and God the Creator is still at work lovingly tending the earth and its creatures both great and small.

The psalmist gives praise to God, whose purposeful work provides for the needs of all creation. God causes plants to grow so that birds and animals have food and shelter. Those same plants provide oil, fruit, and grain for people to eat. Everything has a purpose, down to the rocks that provide a safe hiding place for rabbits. Notice too the purposeful nature of day and night, which provide time for work and rest for both animals and people. God's love and care allow all of creation to live in harmony. (*LS #84*)

In verse 24, the psalmist declares that God is the source and giver of all life. The earth and its resources are a gift, not a right that we can claim. If we, like the psalmist, believe that creation is a gift from God, how we treat the earth, its resources, and one another will reflect God's loving care (*LS #76-77*). The psalm ends with a reminder that we are part of a great circle of life where life and breath are given by God, returned to the earth, and then renewed as God breathes life again into the dust.

The invitation of the psalmist to us, and especially to children, is to join in this chorus of praise and thanksgiving to God. Enjoy helping your children write their own letter of praise to God as they learn, sing, play, and pray their way through Psalm 104. Helping children learn to be attentive to the wonders of God's creation can be one of the greatest gifts that you can give your children this week at VBS. In doing so, they will become more like St. Francis who saw all created beings as “brother” or “sister,” reflections of the amazing beauty of God (*LS #10-12, 87*).

## DAY 3

# GOD'S KINGDOM IS LIKE A SEED

**Scripture Text:** Mark 4:26–32

**Laudato Si':** #96-100

**Seed of Faith:** We are part of God's growing kingdom.

### Story Summary:

Jesus told two parables about God's kingdom. The kingdom is like when someone scatters seed. The seed grows, without the farmer understanding how. The earth does its work—stalk first, then head, and grain. The farmer harvests the grain when it is ripe. The kingdom is also like a tiny mustard seed. It becomes the greatest of all shrubs with large branches where birds can safely nest in its shade.

### Bible Essay:

Children are naturally curious about how things grow, and most love a good surprise. Today's stories have both. Using everyday objects and experiences, Jesus taught his followers about God's kingdom. Today's drama and activities help children discover their place in God's growing kingdom as they explore the nature of seeds and how they grow.

The first of today's parables is found only in Mark's gospel. It follows Jesus' parables of the sower and the lamp under a basket. Like the parable of the sower, the characters in this story are a farmer, seed, and the earth. However, the focus in this story is on the seed. The farmer scatters the seed, then goes about his business—sleeping and waking, working and resting—while the seed does its work quietly and unnoticed. Surprise! One day a sprout appears! In time, the tiny plant grows into a stalk, and then forms a mature head of grain. How it grows is a mystery to the farmer, but he knows to harvest the grain at just the right time.

While the farmer continues his daily rhythm of work and rest, the seed itself grows without human effort. So too the kingdom of God grows without, and often in spite of, our efforts. Paul characterizes the growth of the church in Corinth in this same way in 1 Corinthians 3:6: "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth." Like the seed that grows unto harvest, God's kingdom is both a gift and a miracle.

Next, Jesus compares the kingdom of God to the small mustard seed. Reminiscent of the cedar tree in Ezekiel 17:22–24, which grows from a small sprig into a noble tree, the tiny mustard seed grows into a large shrub providing shade and protection for birds. Jesus' story foretells the growth of God's kingdom that today includes us. As we share God's story with others, we are part of the miraculous process that keeps the kingdom growing! (*LS #97*)

Not all children will have experience with seeds or farming. Try to provide opportunities for children to see and explore seeds in various stages of growth this week. Enjoy wondering with them about how a seed and God's kingdom grow. As you share these stories, help children see that no matter how young or old, how small or tall, we are all part of God's growing kingdom that continues to spread and flourish day by day.

# DAY 4

# WE ARE LIKE TREES

**Scripture Text:** Psalm 52:8–9; Psalm 92:12–15; Jeremiah 17:7–8

**Laudato Si':** #72-73, 84-88, 213, 237

**Seed of Faith:** We can trust in God's love.

## Story Summary:

Those who trust in God are like trees planted by water, sending out roots by a stream. They aren't afraid of heat or drought. They never cease to bear fruit. The psalmists wrote of being like a tree, trusting in the steadfast love of God always. The righteous flourish, producing fruit all their days.

## Bible Essay:

The psalms include frequent references to the created world, including plants, trees, bodies of water, birds, and animals. Psalms 52 and 92 compare people to growing, thriving trees. Likewise, the prophet Jeremiah likens a tree to people who trust in God. (*LS #72*)

King David wrote Psalm 52 after a tragedy—a group of priests and other people worshiping in the tabernacle had been killed at King Saul's command. David's declaration of the goodness of God is surprising in this context. David compared himself to an olive tree, a symbol of peace and long life. He spoke of flourishing, which implies abundance and fullness. An olive tree can live for hundreds and sometimes even thousands of years, producing olives the whole time! Despite experiencing devastating tragedy, David held onto his belief in God's steadfast love.

Psalm 92 is the only psalm titled as a psalm for Sabbath. This is a reminder that Sabbath is not just for rest, but for worship. It is a psalm of gratitude, expressing praise for the goodness of God. Like in Psalm 52, the psalmist here speaks of our being like flourishing trees. The palm tree grows straight and tall in the drought of the wilderness. The cedars of Lebanon were known for their majesty, beauty, usefulness, size, and strength. Those who follow the ways of God will flourish in the same way that these amazing trees do. For the whole course of life, they will continue to grow, develop, and produce good fruit. (*LS #237*)

The prophet Jeremiah described a tree that is planted near a stream, a location where it will receive the nourishment it needs to produce green leaves and good fruit. But Jeremiah was quick to point out that heat and drought are on the way. These troubles test even a tree that's near a water source. The message to followers of God is clear—hard times will come. Trusting God is not an inoculation against pain and hardship. But people of faith have a source of strength and sustenance in difficult times. We can draw on the “living water” when we face adversity.

All of creation has lessons to teach us if only we pay attention (*LS #85*). How are we like trees? That is the question children will explore today. Consider the “roots” we have, like the Bible and the church that ground and support us. Consider the ways we grow and change throughout life, the changes we experience at different seasons, the good “fruit” we produce, and the ways we can provide for others. (*LS #213*)

## DAY 5

# A NEW CREATION

**Scripture Text:** Revelation 21:1–4; 22:1–5

**Laudato Si':** #100, 209-215, 243-245

**Seed of Faith:** God will make all things new.

### Story Summary:

In John's vision, there is a new heaven and a new earth. God will live among people, and death and pain will be no more. The angel showed John the river of the water of life. The Tree of Life is near the river, producing 12 kinds of fruit each month. The leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. The people of God will see God's face. God will be their light and they will reign forever.

### Bible Essay:

John's vision of a new heaven and new earth harkens back to the first garden in Genesis with its Tree of Life, beautiful river, and fruit trees producing in abundance. It is an intimate, personal picture of God. God wipes the tears away from people's eyes. God lives in proximity, making a home among people. People see God face to face, without fear. Conflict, war, disease, pain, and sorrow are no more. (LS #243-245)

Interestingly, God dwells in a holy, restored city. This picture of a perfect city—where people live together in harmony—is especially significant, since urban communities have long experienced the devastating effects of racism, violence, and poverty. True community is possible in this new city.

Revelation 21 is not the only biblical reference to the new heaven and new earth (LS #100). The prophet Isaiah wrote, "For I am about to create new heavens and a new earth; the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind" (Isaiah 65:17). *Bara*, the Hebrew word for "create" used here means to create something from nothing. It's not just "fixing up" what is currently there. This "new creation" is a fresh start, a remake of the world, and is something only God can do. In the New Testament, Peter wrote, "we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home" (2 Peter 3:13).

Jesus taught his disciples to pray in this way: "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." What is God's will and desire for the created world? Revelation gives us a window into that, with its images of safety, abundance, and a loving relationship between God and all creation. In seeing the way God loves creation, we too can join in caring for the earth. Care involves small, daily decisions as individuals (LS #211). It also means paying attention to the ways that our actions as families, churches, communities, corporations, and nations affect the natural world. Do our actions lead us toward God's vision of a new heaven and a new earth, or are they harming creation? (LS #213)

Children may automatically think of "heaven" as some future place in the sky. Help children enter the paradox of God's promised world of peace—it is something we can live in now, even while we wait for these visions to be completely fulfilled.

# DAILY SCHEDULE

Each day of *Great Big Beautiful World* has three main sections: **SOW** (opening worship), **GROW** (response stations) and **GO** (closing worship). Each day is designed to be 2½ hours but could easily be adapted for a longer or shorter time frame. Factor in the amount of time it will take children to move from location to location.

<b>SOW (35 min)</b> <i>Children start in small groups and then gather for worship.</i>	<b>GROW (90 min + snack)</b> <i>Small groups rotate between three activity stations and have a snack.</i>	<b>GO (10 min)</b> <i>The large group gathers for worship and dismissal.</i>
<b>Seeds of Friendship (10 min)</b> (small group)  <b>Seeds of Joy (10 min)</b> (large group, music, prayer)  <b>Seeds of Generosity (5 min)</b> (offering)  <b>Seeds of Wisdom (10 min)</b> (Bible memory, Bible drama)	<b>Dig In (30 min)</b> (Bible study)  <b>Create &amp; Discover (30 min)</b> (art and science activities)  <b>Sprout (30 min)</b> (active games)  <b>Snack Time (15 min)</b>	<b>Songs</b>  <b>Creation Care Cards</b>  <b>Closing Prayer</b>  <b>Dismissal</b>

## Plan Your Daily Schedule

Write down the starting and ending times for each part of VBS. Consider the amount of time it will take children to move from one location or activity to another.

Total length of VBS: \_\_\_\_\_

Arrival & Registration: \_\_\_\_\_

SOW (gathering in small groups): \_\_\_\_\_

SOW (large group worship): \_\_\_\_\_

GROW rotation 1: \_\_\_\_\_

GROW rotation 2: \_\_\_\_\_

GROW rotation 3: \_\_\_\_\_

Snack: \_\_\_\_\_

GO (closing worship): \_\_\_\_\_

Dismissal: \_\_\_\_\_

### Modified Schedules

**2 hours:**

SOW: 25 minutes

GROW: 25 minutes per station +  
10 minutes for snack

GO: 10 minutes

**1½ hours:**

SOW: 20 minutes

GROW: 20 minutes per station

GO: 10 minutes

**1 hour:**

SOW: 15 minutes

GROW: 15 minutes per station

# OVERVIEW

---

Each child is assigned to a small group of five to ten children, depending on the number of Small Group Leaders you have. Children can be grouped by grade or the groups could be multiage.

## Overview of SOW (Opening Worship)

Before children arrive each day, clearly designate and mark a space for each small group using a different tree emblem for each group. These emblems can be printed from the electronic files.

### Seeds of Friendship:

As children arrive each day, they will begin the day in small groups led by an adult Small Group Leader in the worship space. This is an important time for leaders to connect with children in their assigned group, for children to build friendships with each other, to introduce the day's theme, and set the tone for the day. A different activity is suggested for each day that encourages informal exploration of nature items and is followed by a short group sharing time. Group leaders should plan to arrive 10 minutes early so that they are seated in their group location before the children begin to come into the worship space. A printable summary of the Seeds of Friendship Instructions is on the electronic files and on page 53 of the *Worship & Drama Leader Guide*.

### Seeds of Joy:

All small groups gather for worship. This time includes a Call to Worship, singing, and prayer. Song resources are found in the electronic files, including MP3 audio files, sing-along videos, PowerPoint presentations with the song lyrics, notion descriptions, and sheet music.

### Seeds of Generosity:

Children are introduced to an offering project. Children are invited to respond by giving toward a project that helps those in their local community or in another part of the world. See page 17 for an overview of the suggested offering projects and more information. The electronic files have ideas for a visual display to track your progress and book suggestions.

### Seeds of Wisdom:

Children practice learning the Bible memory verses, watch a drama of a Bible story, and reflect on the story. There is a Bible memory PowerPoint slideshow included in the electronic files to assist with learning the verses. The drama scripts and PowerPoint slideshows for the dramas on Days 2–4 are also in the electronic files.

---

## Overview of GROW (Response Stations)

Each day during GROW, children rotate with their Small Group Leader through three response stations: Dig In, Create & Discover, and Sprout. At each station, children will participate in activities that help them extend and experience the Bible story presented during SOW. Assign an order for how groups should rotate through the three response stations. Several small groups will be together at the Dig In station, several at the Create & Discover station, and several at the Sprout station. If you will have more than 50 children, you will likely want to have two Dig In stations, two Create & Discover stations, and two Sprout stations running simultaneously so they aren't overcrowded. Refer to pages 36–37 in this guide for how to incorporate a 15-minute snack time during GROW.

### Station 1: Dig In

Children will Dig In to the Bible story through the review and retelling of the story. Two storytelling options are provided to allow for different learning environments, abilities, and ages. Wondering and discussion questions follow the story, as well as activities from the *Creation Connection* student booklets and a Bible memory activity. There are three Explore activities and a list of Media Connections (books and online resources) to help children deepen their understanding of the Bible story and creation themes. There are a variety of printable documents for Dig In in the electronic files.

### Station 2: Create & Discover

Children will learn about and enjoy God's world through open-ended art projects and hands-on science explorations. Each day's activities focus on specific parts of creation, such as animals, birds, seeds, trees, and fruit. Each activity includes Talk About It prompts to help children connect the activity with the Bible story and their own experiences. There are a variety of templates and other materials for the activities in the electronic files.

### Station 3: Sprout

Children will get outside and play active games related to the Bible story. (Games can also be played inside as needed.) Each game includes Talk About It prompts to help children connect the game with the Bible story and their own experiences. There are a variety of printable documents for Sprout in the electronic files. The At-a-Glance Chart indicates the type of game or activity it is, and the amount of preparation and number of supplies required.

## Overview of GO

At the end of each day, children return to the worship area to sing, pray, and learn about ways they can care for God's creation. Children will receive a Creation Care Card from the *Creation Connection* student booklet to take home. Each card contains creation-related activities to do at home with their families. In this way, children can share what they've learned and take part in caring for the world.

# EARLY CHILDHOOD OVERVIEW

The Early Childhood portion of VBS is designed to meet the developmental needs, interests, and pacing of children ages 4–5. It is intended to be self-contained, though you may choose to include the Early Childhood group in the joint worship time for grades K–5 children. This would allow them to see the dramatic presentation of the Bible story.

The Early Childhood session is structured in the same manner as the session for older children, with the time divided into **SOW**, **GROW**, and **GO** sections.

## SOW

Each session begins with **SOW**, which includes Seeds of Friendship (“get to know you” activities), Seeds of Joy (songs and prayers), and Seeds of Generosity (offering project). Children will hear an interactive retelling of the Bible story, respond to wondering questions, learn a Bible memory verse, do activities from the *A Garden of Stories* booklet, and have a snack. The amount of time spent on **SOW** as a large group can vary significantly depending on the needs of your group.

## GROW

There are three types of activities provided for **GROW**:

- **Creation Station:** There are three arts and crafts activities provided for each day, along with Talk About It prompts.
- **Sprout:** There are three active games provided for each day, along with Talk About It prompts. These are designed to be done outside if you have adequate space and supervision but could be adapted for smaller indoor spaces.
- **Nature Explorers:** There are two nature-related science activities provided for each day to get children actively exploring God’s world, along with Talk About It prompts.

If you have several leaders/assistants, these activities can be done as rotations. This would mean setting up activities in different areas and having children rotate between them. A leader would need to be at each area to coordinate and supervise each activity. Alternatively, keep the whole group together and move from one activity to the next. Depending on the length of time, you may want to offer a rest time.

## GO

Each session concludes with a song and prayer. The Creation Care Cards from *A Garden of Stories* student booklets are sent home, along with any artwork from the day.

# OFFERING PROJECT

The Seeds of Generosity time during each daily SOW session provides an opportunity to focus on the needs of your community and/or the wider world. What organization(s) you choose to support are up to you and your team, but we provide some suggestions here.

As highlighted in *Laudato Si'* (#27-31), fresh water is a limited resource and many people around the world do not have access to clean, safe water to drink. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have estimated that over a billion people around the world are forced to use unsafe water for bathing, cooking, drinking, and washing. This results in the spread of diseases like cholera. It is common for children, especially girls, to spend hours walking to get water every day, which keeps them from attending school and playing with friends. In North America, many communities also face unsafe water. Flint, Michigan, is experiencing a lead-poisoning crisis from contaminated water. As of May 2018, there were 174 drinking water advisories in more than 100 Canadian First Nations communities. Some of these water advisories date back over twenty years!

Find suggestions for organizations to support below or research and choose another recipient (ideally related to the creation care theme in some way). The leader guides, electronic files, and Pinterest board (<https://www.pinterest.com/GrowingUpCatholic/great-big-beautiful-world-vbs/offering-project/>) include some options to specifically support clean water offering projects.

## Offering Display

Create a visual offering display that will keep children aware of your progress throughout the week. The electronic files have ideas for displays, as well as video links and books to use to educate children about the suggested agencies, the issues around clean water, and ways children can help. (See the Worship & Drama folder.) In the *Creation Connection* student booklet, there is a waterdrop named Kai (rhymes with high) who communicates water-related information throughout the booklet. The electronic files contain a large printable version of Kai as well as blank waterdrops to copy if you wish to use those as part of your display.

All living things need water to survive. Fresh water is a limited resource and many people around the world do not have access to clean, safe water to drink.

## Parish Mission Experience: Families on a Mission

As mentioned on page 6 of this guide, we sell an affordable parish resource to help you coordinate a local mission experience for your families related to creation care. If you offer *Families on a Mission*, you may wish to make the local organization you will be serving the recipient of your offering project. Learn more at <https://pastoral.center/families-on-a-mission>.

## Catholic Relief Services

CRS has been addressing water insecurity internationally for decades. Find a video, water stories, and more information on the VBS Pinterest board.

- CRS has developed a 60-90 minute module for family catechesis titled Water is Life. <https://www.heifer.org/gift-catalog/basic-needs/the-gift-of-clean-water-donation.html>

## Heifer International

Heifer International provides irrigation pumps to communities along with training in water conservation and irrigation techniques. The *Creation Connection* student booklet has information about treadle pumps, one type of pump that Heifer International helps families install.

- Gifts can be given in any amount. One “share” of water is \$20. A “full gift” of water is \$300. <https://www.heifer.org/gift-catalog/basic-needs/the-gift-of-clean-water-donation.html>
- A gift of \$150 will purchase an irrigation pump for a community. <https://www.heifer.org/gift-catalog/basic-needs/irrigation-pumps-donation.html>

# ORDERING INFORMATION

Visit [GrowingUpCatholicVBS.com](http://GrowingUpCatholicVBS.com) to purchase necessary materials. Use the following checklist:

- ❑ **Creation Connection** is a student booklet for children in grades K–5 and will be used each day during the Dig In response station. It also contains daily Creation Care Cards to send home. These cards contain activities for families to do together. It is strongly recommended for each child and Dig In Leader. Have extra copies available for children who start later in the week. The full-color booklets are 24 pages, 8.5” x 11”. *(Sample included in physical starter kit.)*
- ❑ **A Garden of Stories** is a student booklet for Early Childhood children ages 4–5. It contains illustrated Bible stories, activities, and family activities. It also contains daily Creation Care Cards to send home. These cards contain activities for families to do together. You will need one booklet for each child and Early Childhood Leader. Have extra copies available for children who start later in the week. The full-color booklets are 16 pages, 8.5” x 11”. *(Sample included in physical starter kit.)*
- ❑ **Activity Area Poster Pack** contains five decorative 11” x 17” posters for the Worship & Drama, Dig In, Create & Discover, Sprout, and Early Childhood areas. Purchase additional packs if you have more than one of each area. *(One pack included in physical starter kit.)*
- ❑ Post **Invitation Posters** on your buildings or in your neighborhood. Order extras for promotional purposes. 11” x 17”. *(Two included in physical starter kit.)*
- ❑ Affordable, bulk-priced **Student Music CDs and MP3 cards** are available for purchase so children can take home the music from the week to share with their families.
- ❑ **USB drive with electronic files** is available for those who purchase the downloadable starter kit but do not have a strong internet connection for downloading resources. *(Included in physical starter kit.)*
- ❑ **Music video DVDs** are available for those who prefer them over streaming the videos or playing them from the electronic files.



# ELECTRONIC FILES

The Music & Electronic files in the physical VBS kit contains essential materials to make your VBS a success. There is a folder for each activity area. Email the relevant folder to each leader. The chart below shows all the resources in the electronic files:

Director	Worship & Drama	Early Childhood
Director Guide Staff Orientation PowerPoint Supplies and Donations List Customizable Letter to Families Customizable Bulletin Insert Thank You Note Customizable Registration Form and Waivers Compiled Booklists Leader Assignment Cards Nametags Attendance Record Previews of Booklets (not reproducible)	Worship & Drama Leader Guide 1 PowerPoint Bible Memory Slideshow 3 PowerPoint Drama Slideshows 5 Worship Symbols Seeds of Friendship Instructions Offering Project Drama Scripts Tree Emblems  <i>The Technology Coordinator will also need access to this folder.</i>	Early Childhood Leader Guide Day 1 Story Cards Days 1–5 Bible Memory Cards Day 2 Bird Cards Day 2 Storytelling Puppets Day 2 Nature Scavenger Hunt Cards Day 2 Magnifying Glass Template Day 2 & Day 5 Play Dough and Salt Dough Recipes Days 2–5 Bible Memory Strips Day 3 Mustard Seed Tent Cards Day 3 Farmer Tent Cards Day 3 Seed Cookies Recipe Day 4 Tree Cards
Dig In (Bible activities)	Create & Discover	Sprout (active games)
Dig In Leader Guide Day 1 Bible Story Script Days 2–5 Bible Memory Strips Day 2 & Day 5 Play Dough and Salt Dough Recipes Day 2 Nature Finger Puppets Day 3 Wheat Bingo Gameboards Day 3 Calling Cards	Create & Discover Leader Guide Day 1 Animal Silhouettes Day 1 Animal Tracks Cards Day 1 Animal Tracks Answer Key Day 2 Bird Cards Day 3 “Seed Soup” Recipe Cards Day 4 Tactile Tree Sample Day 4 Community Trees Guidebook Day 4 Silhouette Palm Tree Template Day 4 Tree Verse Strips Day 5 Fruit Garland Drying Instructions	Sprout Leader Guide Day 1 Plant and Animal Cards Day 1 Discussion Prompts Day 2 Nature Quest Checklist Day 3 Customizable Planting Notes Day 5 Garden Cleanup Game Questions
Music*	Publicity & Outreach	Extras
Songbook with lyric sheet, body movements, and sheet music MP3 audio files Sing-Along Videos (streaming and MP4 files) PowerPoint Song Lyric Slideshows Sing-along music videos (with lyrics & body movements)	Invitation Poster Invitation Postcard Logos Website Banner for Social Media	COVID tools

# DIRECTOR CHECKLIST

## 4–5 months before

- Choose an assistant director to work with you to coordinate and lead VBS planning.
- Read through the *Great Big Beautiful World* curriculum.
- Read the timeline for Publicity and Outreach on page 28 of this guide and determine how you will promote your VBS.
- Select the date and time for VBS and reserve the space.
- Estimate the number of leaders needed. See page 22 of this guide.
- Choose an offering project from page 17 of this guide or select an alternate recipient.
- Talk to other parish leaders about a coordinated creation care effort across ages. See pages 5 and 6.

## 3 months before

- Choose group leaders and Worship & Drama participants. Contact other volunteers.
- Determine meeting spaces and create a map showing locations.
- Order extra leader guides as needed.
- Put the bulletin insert from the electronic files in your bulletin. Contact all volunteers who sign up on the insert.

## 6–8 weeks before

- Place the two invitation posters in your church and in a public community location. Order more as needed.
- Open preregistration.
- Distribute registration information and letters to parents (electronic files).
- Divide students into groups as registrations are received.
- Create student lists and write names on the Attendance Record (electronic files).
- Set the date and time for staff orientation.
- Give the Early Childhood Leader the *Early Childhood Leader Guide* and access to all related music and teaching aids material.
- Give the *Worship & Drama Leader Guide* to relevant staff. Give the Worship Leader access to all music-related materials (songs, videos, PowerPoint slideshows, lyrics, motions). Give the Drama Leader access to the dramas and the drama PowerPoints.
- Distribute leader guides to **GROW** staff (Dig In, Create & Discover, Sprout). Email relevant teaching aids material from the electronic files to **GROW** staff.
- Visit the “Great Big Beautiful World VBS” board on the *Growing Up Catholic* Pinterest page for additional resources. See <https://pinterest.com/GrowingUpCatholic/great-big-beautiful-world-vbs>. Share links with leaders and volunteers.
- Order *A Garden of Stories* student booklets for Early Childhood and *Creation Connection* student booklets for grades K–5 children.
- Review the Supplies and Donations List (electronic files) and contact people who may want to contribute.

## 4 weeks before

- ❑ Plan a VBS dedication or announcement during a Mass with your pastor or liturgy committee. See page 29 of this guide.
- ❑ Plan a “Creation Celebration” closing program. See page 39 of this guide.
- ❑ Print and distribute the Leader Assignment Cards from the electronic files to all leaders and volunteers.
- ❑ Hold a staff orientation. See page 27 of this guide and the Staff Orientation PowerPoint presentation (electronic files).
- ❑ Finalize the volunteers for all VBS responsibilities. See page 26 of this guide.
- ❑ Schedule with the custodian or other helpers to move furniture before and after VBS.
- ❑ Share estimated attendance numbers with the Early Childhood Leader so snacks can be planned.
- ❑ Create the Worship Symbols and Mobile Hanger (electronic files).
- ❑ Create an offering project visual (see Offering Project in electronic files).
- ❑ Conduct rehearsals for the drama.

## 2 weeks before

- ❑ Copy the Seeds of Friendship Instructions for each Small Group Leader (electronic files, under Worship & Drama).
- ❑ Create Tree Emblems for each group of children (electronic files, under Worship & Drama).
- ❑ Make nametags or print them from the electronic files.
- ❑ Remove and cut apart the Creation Care Cards from each student booklet and organize the cards by day.
- ❑ Check books out of the library for use in the various **GROW** areas. See the Compiled Booklists in the electronic files.
- ❑ Conduct rehearsals for the drama.

## Week of VBS

- ❑ Hold a VBS dedication service during Mass. See page 29 of this guide.
- ❑ Hang up activity area posters to designate each area.
- ❑ Set up the stage for dramas.
- ❑ Set up the offering display.
- ❑ Set up the small group areas for **SOW**. Set out a tree emblem and nametags for each group, as well as the supplies for Day 1 of Seeds of Friendship.
- ❑ Set up the three **GROW** stations: Dig In, Create & Discover, and Sprout. See page 30 of this guide.
- ❑ Decorate the worship area, Early Childhood room(s), and all the **GROW** stations. See pages 30–31 of this guide.
- ❑ Check in with all your leaders to see what needs they have.
- ❑ Be sure all technology needs are addressed.
- ❑ Prepare snacks. See pages 36–37 of this guide.

## During VBS

- ❑ Plan and organize the drop-off and registration procedures for each day.
- ❑ Meet with staff 30 minutes before VBS begins each day to pray together, go over last-minute details, and answer questions.
- ❑ Count the offering.
- ❑ Keep records as described on page 33 of this guide.
- ❑ Meet briefly with staff after Day 1.
- ❑ Offer encouragement to volunteers each day.
- ❑ Post daily announcements in a prominent place.
- ❑ Prepare for staff recognition.
- ❑ Prepare Student Participation Certificates.
- ❑ Prepare for the “Creation Celebration” closing program (page 39 of this guide) and publicize about it to families.

## After VBS

- ❑ Collect the leader guides.
- ❑ Clean up the spaces used and let teachers know where to return extra supplies.
- ❑ Return furniture to its original location.
- ❑ Send thank you notes (electronic files) with seed packets to each leader and volunteer. Or plan another way to acknowledge leaders. See page 40.
- ❑ Provide feedback to The Pastoral Center about the VBS materials. The evaluation form is online at [GrowingUpCatholicVBS.com](http://GrowingUpCatholicVBS.com).

# STAFF OVERVIEW

## Director and Assistant Director

The Director and Assistant Director coordinate and organize VBS and provide support to volunteers during VBS week. This team will be familiar with the entire curriculum and will be responsible for decisions related to leaders, orientation, content, facilities, publicity and promotion, registration, and supplies.

## Leaders for SOW (Opening Worship) and GO (Closing Worship)

The following leaders are needed for opening and closing worship:

### Small Group Leaders

Leaders are needed for each small group of children. Their primary role is to greet children as they arrive at VBS, lead small group discussions, and accompany their group during worship. Small group leaders travel with their designated group to each station during GROW and provide support to the GROW leaders as needed. They will accompany their group during the GO closing worship and help dismiss children at the end of the day.

### Worship & Drama Leaders

The following leaders will take part in leading worship and drama during SOW and GO:

- **Worship Leader:** welcomes children to worship; introduces the daily theme and Bible memory activity; guides the discussion following the drama; leads other components of worship as needed
- **Drama Leader:** finds actors and coordinates the drama; plans and leads rehearsals before VBS; gathers and coordinates props
- **Music Leader:** works with the Worship Leader to choose songs; finds musicians and coordinates music team (if applicable); leads singing and motions
- **Technology Coordinator:** prepares the projector and screen; coordinates and manages technology resources to be used during worship
- **Creation Care Leader** (*optional, could be done by the Worship Leader*): distributes the Creation Care Cards to Small Group Leaders during GO (closing worship); introduces and explains challenges on the cards each day

## Leaders for GROW

The following leaders are needed for the GROW stations:

- **Dig In Leaders:** Two leaders prepare and lead a 30-minute session each day that includes retelling the Bible story, memory verse activities, and extension activities in a student booklet. The second leader serves as co-leader or assistant.
- **Create & Discover Leaders:** Two leaders prepare and lead a 30-minute art and science learning station for each day, with activities related to the daily theme. The second leader serves as co-leader or assistant.
- **Sprout Leaders:** Two leaders prepare and lead active outdoor games and activities related to the daily theme. The second leader serves as co-leader or assistant.

## Leaders for Early Childhood

Two or more leaders are needed to organize, plan, and lead a self-contained Early Childhood group. These leaders will function as guides and spiritual mentors for 4- and 5-year-olds. They will set up the Early Childhood areas, lead age-appropriate music and worship, and plan and lead activities for this age group as outlined in the *Early Childhood Leader Guide*.

# LEADER ASSIGNMENT CARDS

Copy and distribute these Leader Assignment Cards (pages 23–25) and distribute to VBS leaders and volunteers. These are also available in the electronic files.



## Director

### Responsibilities before VBS

- Organize and carry out advance preparations for VBS. See checklist on pages 20–21 of this guide.
- Invite and confirm volunteers, including leaders, assistants, and youth helpers. Give each person a Leader Assignment Card (electronic files).
- Lead planning meetings for VBS organizers and leaders.
- Plan and lead VBS orientation for volunteers.
- Publicize VBS.
- Oversee registration and compile class lists, adding new registrants each day. Use materials from the electronic files.
- Be present during VBS and help where needed.
- Implement a child safety plan and educate volunteers prior to VBS.
- Plan and lead the “Creation Celebration” closing event (if applicable).
- Coordinate the purchase of student booklets and supplies.

### Responsibilities during VBS

- Collect and record the offering.
- Organize and lead the pickup and dismissal procedures.
- Assist with preparations for the next day.

## Assistant Director

### Responsibilities before VBS

- Work with Director to organize and carry out advance preparations for VBS.
- Organize and gather registration of participants.

### Responsibilities during VBS

- Organize registration and check-in the first day and new registrants on subsequent days.
- Serve as the point person for first aid throughout the week.
- Assist Small Group Leaders with bathroom supervision and be aware of child safety procedures.
- Check in with Small Group Leaders and GROW leaders (Dig In, Create & Discover, Sprout) throughout the day.
- Assist with finding extra supplies or to assist with unexpected student needs.
- Assist the Director as needed.



## Small Group Leader

- Function as a guide and spiritual mentor for a group of children throughout VBS.
- Develop relationships with children in your group, paying attention to individual needs and group dynamics.
- Arrive 10 minutes early to greet and welcome children as they arrive.
- Take attendance.
- Lead your small group in an opening Seeds of Friendship activity and discussion each day. Instructions will be provided.
- Sit with your group during opening and closing worship.
- Guide your group from place to place throughout the day, ensuring the children's safety.
- Provide support and assistance for GROW leaders (for games, art and science projects, and Bible activities).
- Distribute Creation Care Cards to your group before dismissal.
- Help dismiss children to parents.
- Attend staff orientation.

**GREAT  
BIG  
beautiful  
WORLD**

## Worship Leader

- Plan and lead worship times using the plans provided in the *Worship & Drama Leader Guide* and songs.
- Read the dramas in the *Worship & Drama Leader Guide* and coordinate them with worship plans.
- Collaborate with the Drama Leader and musicians to plan worship sessions.
- Communicate with the Technology Coordinator about technology needs for each day (recordings, slides, microphones).
- Attend staff orientation.

**GREAT  
BIG  
beautiful  
WORLD**

## Drama Leader

- Read the dramas in the *Worship & Drama Leader Guide*.
- Find drama participants and copy/print and distribute scripts.
- Coordinate rehearsals and direct the five dramas.
- Locate props for the dramas.
- Set up the stage.
- Collaborate with the Worship Leader to plan worship.
- Communicate technology needs to the Technology Coordinator for each day.
- Attend staff orientation.

**GREAT  
BIG  
beautiful  
WORLD**

## Technology Coordinator

- Set up the laptop, projector, and screen each day.
- Work with the Worship Leader to determine how recorded music will be played during the worship sessions. Locate nature sounds videos or audio recordings to use during worship.
- Practice using the Drama PowerPoint slideshows with the dramas (Days 2–4), sing-along videos or lyric slideshows, and Bible Memory PowerPoint slideshow (electronic files). Refer to the *Worship & Drama Leader Guide* for usage.
- Troubleshoot technology problems that arise.
- Assist GROW leaders (Dig In, Create & Discover, Sprout) in acquiring, setting up, and using media players with an Internet connection, such as laptops or tablets.
- Attend staff orientation.

**GREAT  
BIG  
beautiful  
WORLD**

## GROW Leaders (Dig In, Create & Discover, Sprout)

- Prepare and lead three 30-minute response times each day for three different groups.
- Read the leader guide and choose activities that work best for your groups.
- Coordinate adult and youth volunteer helpers to assist with the activities.
- Gather supplies for the activities. Print and copy relevant materials from the electronic files.
- Monitor the use of technology (Dig In, Create & Discover).
- Save copies of receipts and give them to the Director for reimbursement.
- Attend staff orientation.

**GREAT  
BIG  
beautiful  
WORLD**

## Early Childhood Leader

- Provide a warm, welcoming atmosphere and function as a guide and spiritual mentor for a group of young children.
- Be aware of individual needs of group members as well as group dynamics.
- Be aware of the developmental needs of 4- and 5-year-olds.
- Greet children as they arrive at VBS and take attendance.
- Gather supplies, set up the group area, and lead the daily sessions as outlined in the *Early Childhood Leader Guide*.
- Coordinate adult and youth volunteer helpers to assist with the activities.
- Attend staff orientation.

**GREAT  
BIG  
beautiful  
WORLD**