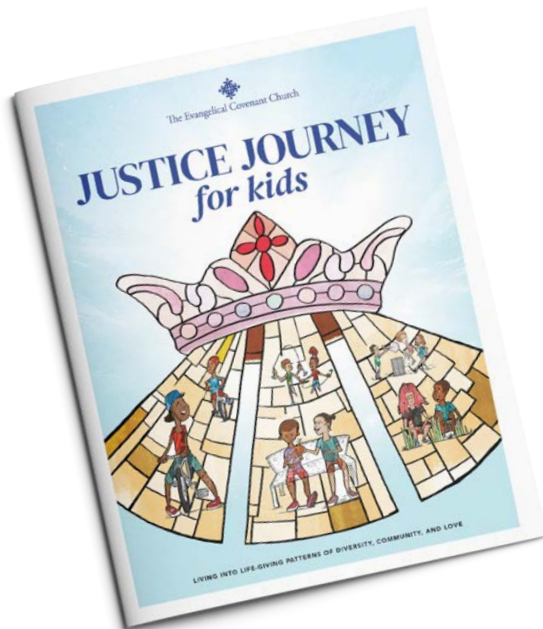


AN INTRODUCTION TO  
**JUSTICE JOURNEY**  
*for kids*



For more information, go to:  
[covchurch.org/justicejourney/](http://covchurch.org/justicejourney/)



### WHY JUSTICE JOURNEY FOR KIDS?

We created Justice Journey for Kids (JJ4K) because we discerned gaps in the discipleship and spiritual formation offered to kids within our denomination and much of the North American church. We recognized that while children were coming to know Jesus as Lord and giving their lives to Christ, they did not develop a full understanding of God as a God of justice. As kids matured into teenagers and young adults, they frequently struggled to see the significance of biblical justice and diversity or to understand these things as a meaningful and missional part of God's original intention for creation and the church. Many youth and young adults failed to see God as actively working in the world—particularly through the church—and moving to reconcile all that sin has distorted and broken.

We also noticed a trend as we studied the growing number of young people leaving the church. Young believers who did develop a passion for justice commonly felt a need to leave the church, or pursue justice outside of the church, because of what they saw as Christianity's lack of commitment to justice. JJ4K is a biblically based discipleship curriculum that has the power to reverse this disturbing trend. Through scriptural study, communal spiritual practices, and missional service this curriculum empowers kids to become advocates for biblical justice, ambassadors of reconciliation, evangelists for Jesus, and everyday peace makers. Our goal is that JJ4K will enhance children's desire for Jesus and biblical justice, empowering them to marry evangelism and biblical

justice in ways that produce a distinctive Christlike ethic and witness in the world.

If we continued to wait until adulthood to disciple the next generation into a holistic understanding of the gospel, we risked losing an entire generation. This observation was confirmed by research that documented the number of families who were choosing to participate in service opportunities, but not traditional worship. It became clear that we needed to start welcoming families into worship as a lifestyle, rather than merely a Sunday service.

In addition, the ways that kids are sidelined or segmented from the broader discipleship, missiology, and communion of congregations is an injustice. We believe the church is called to be intergenerational. JJ4K is a discipleship model anchored in the belief that children are fully part of the body of Christ, and it is crafted with the belief that the next generation has something meaningful to offer the broader body now, not just when they get older. This approach to congregational formation celebrates the talents kids have to offer and contribute to congregational flourishing today. JJ4K aids their development by embracing the diversity of God's kingdom as a precious gift and unpacking how we are empowered by the Spirit and the love of Christ to overcome the injustice inherent in a broken world in Jesus's name.

Finally, we were inspired by neuroscientific research concerning a child's association with matters of diversity by the age of seven. This research helped crystallize the importance of beginning conversations about the missional purpose of diversity and biblical justice as a part of children's discipleship. The associations a child makes by the age of seven will play a critical role in their understanding of, engagement with, and posture towards diversity for the rest of their lives. This neurological insight was revelatory and helped us understand the need to recalibrate our discipleship offerings and begin these formational conversations much earlier.

## THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF JJ4K

JJ4K emphasizes the Great Commission and the Great Commandment, evangelism and justice, proclamation and demonstration, and ministry in word and deed as the approach to healing our fractured world, all while recognizing the invaluable role our kids play in this kingdom work.

You will notice these key principles throughout the curriculum:

- We serve a God of abundance. God created a beautiful, diverse world and called it good.
- We serve a God who created enough for everyone's needs, but not enough for our greed.
- Sin distorts God's original intent, mars our relationships, and creates brokenness in our world.
- Sin keeps us from fulfilling our created purpose of making God's name known and love shown throughout the world. Sin also keeps us from living and loving like Jesus.
- The brokenness sin creates is personal, relational, social, systemic, and legislative. Sin hinders communion with God, ourselves, our neighbors, and how we steward creation.

## THE EDUCATIONAL AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION APPROACHES OF JJ4K

Jesus heals what sin broke, bringing justice, liberation, and reconciliation. The question is whether we will accept Jesus and the invitation to new life. This curriculum conveys the gospel through age-appropriate, interactive experiences. Each module takes this approach:

- **DWELLING WITH GOD:** Scripture introducing God's concern for justice and healing.
- **DISCOVERY LEARNING:** Exploration of a concept utilizing active group discovery methods.
- **ASSURANCE:** Christ came to lead us back to God, healing what sin distorted and broke.
- **REFLECTION AND RESPONSE:** How might we concretely follow Jesus by living into what we have discovered?
- **CHALLENGE:** Living and loving like Jesus is not easy. How is it difficult? How does the Holy Spirit help us and give us the power to overcome these challenges?
- **CELEBRATION:** We celebrate God's invitation to participate in the ministry of reconciliation, contributing to healing in our world. We celebrate God's diverse creation, and Jesus's gift of the Holy Spirit who empowers us to live out what we've learned. We celebrate that God chooses to allow us to be the hands and feet of Christ in the world

today, people who make God's name known and love shown throughout the world.

## SESSIONS INCLUDED IN THE JJ4K CURRICULUM

The JJ4K curriculum includes eight modules with four sessions each, for a total of 32 sessions.

### MODULE 1: GOD'S DIVERSE CREATION

- SESSION 1: Creation and Diversity
- SESSION 2: The Community of Creation and Diversity
- SESSION 3: The Church and Diversity
- SESSION 4: The Kingdom of Heaven and Diversity

### MODULE 2: GOD OF JUSTICE

- SESSION 1: Injustice
- SESSION 2: God's Justice Is Restorative
- SESSION 3: God's Shalom
- SESSION 4: How Sin Keeps Us from Loving Our Neighbor and Hurts Our World

### MODULE 3: IDENTITY WITH GOD AND EACH OTHER

- SESSION 1: Made in God's Image
- SESSION 2: Appreciating the Diversity of God's People
- SESSION 3: Treating and Valuing Everyone Equally
- SESSION 4: Responding to Evil and Hate with Love and Justice

### MODULE 4: JOURNEY OF BROKENNESS AND RECONCILIATION

- SESSION 1: Brokenness
- SESSION 2: Right Relationships
- SESSION 3: Judging Others
- SESSION 4: Brokenness, Repentance, and Reconciliation

### MODULE 5: JOINING WITH GOD TO OVERCOME INJUSTICE

- SESSION 1: God's Plan to Overcome Injustice Through the Prophets
- SESSION 2: God's Plan to Overcome Injustice Through Jesus
- SESSION 3: God's Plan to Overcome Injustice Through the Holy Spirit
- SESSION 4: God's Plan to Overcome Injustice Through the Church

### MODULE 6: ONE INTERCONNECTED BODY, MANY INVALUABLE PARTS

- SESSION 1: Every Person Is Important
- SESSION 2: Every Part Is Important
- SESSION 3: Every Part Is Treasured and Irreplaceable
- SESSION 4: Caring for Our Vulnerable Neighbors

### MODULE 7: JESUS, THE ANSWER AND THE WAY

- SESSION 1: Jesus, The Way
- SESSION 2: Jesus, The True Vine
- SESSION 3: A New Commandment
- SESSION 4: Thinking and Acting Like Jesus

### MODULE 8: MOVING TOWARD SOLIDARITY

- SESSION 1: Eyes to See
- SESSION 2: Ears to Hear
- SESSION 3: Hearts That Respond
- SESSION 4: Practicing Solidarity

## WHY SHOULD WE USE THE JJ4K CURRICULUM?

The need to more effectively reach the next generation is urgent. Studies have shown that we are losing increasingly larger portions of emerging generations in the church. If children don't feel seen, known, and valued by the church community, they will never be drawn in. We are seeing in real time the loss of high school and college aged congregants who are telling us they don't see the church living out the foundational beliefs set forth in the gospel. If we don't empower children today, they will not be here tomorrow.

We know:

- A child's spiritual moorings are in place by age 10.
- Most people still come to faith between the ages of 4 and 14.
- **Currently, 55% of children in the U.S. never set foot in the church.**

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these." —Mark 10:14

If we do not create an environment that embraces the diversity of God's beautiful creation and makes all feel welcome and cherished, the church as we know it is in jeopardy. Utilizing JJ4K as a congregation allows for a multigenerational approach, with the potential to bring people back who feel left out of church through a connection to justice and mission while also capitalizing on children's sense of wonder, excitement, and inclusion—a model for the rest of the congregation.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

You may also be interested in exploring the following resources from the Covenant:

- [Gather 2025 Report from the President](#)
- [The Six-Fold Test](#)
- [The Kingdom Mosaic: Life Together Series](#)
- [Becoming a Beloved Community](#)

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The Evangelical Covenant Church