

## Vacation Bible School and Summer Study Part I

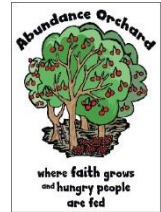
by Nellie Howard, Resource Center Director



SUMMER! What a great time to learn something new about God's Creation. The Resource Center for the Presbytery of West Virginia has some good choices for Summer Bible School for both children and adults. Most of the programs offered below may be adapted for Sunday School, after-school programs or church retreats. Part I of this article will let you know about what your Resource Center has for children while Part II which will appear in the next newsletter and will cover offerings for adults to study.

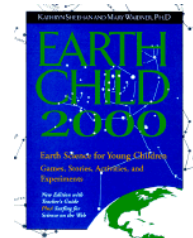
Let's start with a free Bible School program **from The Society of St. Andrew** –

<http://endhunger.org> This web site offers two choices which are both completely free and downloadable. The two choices are an Old Testament-based program or a New Testament-based program. Each offers enough material for five 2-3 hour sessions for older preschoolers through grade six. If you are into *Pinterest* you will be glad to know that they even have a large Pinterest Board full of ideas for games, crafts and recipes.



Another VBS choice might be the offering from **Solar Under the Sun, an Ecumenical Ministry of the Synod of the Sun PC(USA)**. This one is designed for five days and includes lots of different light-oriented games, crafts and activities. You may download a preview of the curriculum at <http://www.solarunderthesun.org/> or preview it in the Resource Center.

If what you are need for your VBS program are some Earth-loving activities then take a look at the book, **Earth Child 2000: Earth Science for young Children, Games Stories, Activities, and Experiments**. The activities included in this giant book by Kathryn Sheehan and Mary Waidner are not necessarily just for small children. Really, who doesn't love making Sun Tea or planning a picnic? Other activities include learning empathy for nocturnal animals. Learn for yourself what it might be like to be a bat, a lightening bug or a mole. In these 475 pages we may help our children learn about the food chain, extinction, recycling, and treading lightly on planet Earth.



If you would like your kids to do more to help you save the Earth then it may help to refer back to a favorite resource from 1990 which was updated in 2008. **Fifty Simple things Kids Can Do to Save the Earth** by the EarthWorks Group is a small book with some large ideas like teaching children to pay attention to things they want to buy from stores to learn to judge if an item is well made or is something that will break easily. Kids learn ways to save water, how littering hurts wildlife, and how chemicals you can't pronounce are probably dangerous and much more. They also learn what to do about these problems. We have

both the original 1990 version and the 2008 update.

For older children we have a unique study by Mike Poteet, **God's Creation, Our Health: Taking Action Together**. Here is a 4-session study focusing on La Oroya, Peru, one of the most polluted cities on the planet as well as CAMBIALO, an organization dedicated to building a better environment in La Oroya. It connects the problems of Peru with problems



in our own communities and leads participants to fix those problems. The first session begins with Genesis and God's call to God's people to be stewards of Creation. Other sessions encourage participants to meet with local environmental groups and even to arrange video meetings with some of the youth in La Oroya.



Last but not least of the children's VBS suggestions is ***Clean Water for All God's Children*** by Living Waters for the World. This one is a personal favorite of mine. You can follow the program exactly as they give the five-day plan or pick and choose what fits your class best. It includes opening skits for each day as well as Bible stories, a mission focus, craft, recreation & snacks, music and time for reflection. We have the full plan in the Resource along with a DVD, *Clean Water for All of God's Children* and some extra curriculum aids. You may learn more by going to [www.livingwatersfortheworld.org](http://www.livingwatersfortheworld.org).