

F.O.C.U.S.

This is a course made up of three modules which will introduce, or reintroduce, people to the Christian journey (or journeys). Our goal is not to provide ready-made answers to personal theological questions. Instead we will journey together in the asking of the questions. Perhaps we may even discover a few new questions altogether. Although each of the modules will expand upon the others, participants should feel free to attend the different modules as their schedules permit. However, consistent attendance at each of the sessions within a module is strongly recommended.



Three stand alone modules.

Salem United Church of Christ

F.O.C.U.S.

**FOUNDATION ON CHRIST
UNITING SALEM
OCTOBER 2009 – MARCH 2010**



God's Love Experienced and Expressed

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F.O.C.U.S. Course

Module One

"A Historical Approach to Understanding the Bible"

October 28, November 4, 11 and 18
Wednesday evenings 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm

Have you ever wanted to understand the Bible better? Have you ever found yourself struggling to read the Bible in a meaningful way? Why did certain books make it into the canon and others did not? Want to know what "canon" means? Come and join us and find out. These four sessions will look at the Bible from a historical perspective in terms of its construction and its value to the communities of faith to whom it was directed. These sessions will serve as a great way to get an overview of the Bible.

Module Two

"A Historical Look at the Birth Narratives"

December 2, 9, 16
Wednesday evenings 7:00 pm - 8:30pm
Vespers 8:30 pm - 9:00 pm

So, did the innkeeper really say "There's no room in the inn"? How many camels did accompany the Wise Men? Was He born in Bethlehem or Jerusalem? Matthew and Luke provide us with rich stories about the birth of Jesus. We tell these stories, year after year, at our annual church pageants, Christmas Eve services and in our homes. Or, do we? What do Mark and John have to say? For three weeks during the Advent season we will be looking at these cherished stories and re-discovering the "truth" and meaning within them.

Module Three *Lenten Bible Study*

"Countering Pharaoh's Production-Consumption Society Today"

February 24, March 3, 10, 17, 24
Wednesday evenings 7:00 - 8:30 pm

"It is a journey from slavery to covenant that we keep making over and over again... [because] Pharaoh has immense power always to draw us back into slavery." - *Walter Brueggemann*

God's way is not the world's way. And yet, we find ourselves, again and again being pulled into the ways of the world. This five-week study series will challenge us to look at how we "choose" to live our lives. Come out during Lent and hear about God's vision of "neighborhood" and how it would look to be "liberated" from the seductive ways of the world. (as dictated by Pharaoh!). This study draws upon the Torah (a.k.a. Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy) and the message of Jesus.

"WARNING: THIS PROGRAM MAY BE HAZARDOUS TO YOUR CHURCH, SOCIETY AND THE AMERICAN WAY OF LIFE, AND COULD POTENTIALLY HELP RESTORE THE MEANING OF COVENANT." Livingthequestions.com

The Reverend Bill Middleton, Pastor, will facilitate all modules. Each module is self-contained and in a manageable length of either three, four or five sessions. Each module stands on its own; please take this opportunity to deepen your faith.