

# THE COMBINED TEACHER'S GUIDE

**WINTER QUARTER 2018-19**

DECEMBER • JANUARY • FEBRUARY

Christian Education Department  
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## BASIC SUPPLIES

|                           |                               |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Bible dictionary          | writing paper                 |
| Bible pictures and maps   | DVD recorder/player           |
| CD players                | milk crates                   |
| chart paper               | paper – letter, drawing, pen- |
| Christian music – books,  | cils, pens, markers           |
| sheets, recordings        | poster boards                 |
| Christian videos and DVDs | robes, scarves                |
| crayons                   | old clothing                  |
| digital camera            | scissors, glue, paste         |
| digital camcorder         | video player                  |
| drawing paper             |                               |

**THE COMBINED TEACHER'S GUIDE**  
**Winter: December 2018 – February 2019**

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**Liberating Faith Studies**

**Unit I: God Commands Our Love, Respect, And Obedience**

**Lesson 1**

**December 2, 2018**

**Love and Devotion**

**Devotional Reading:** Mark 12:28-34

**Lesson Scripture:** Deuteronomy 6:1-9

**Focus Scripture:** Deuteronomy 6:1-9

**Key Verse:** You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Deuteronomy 6:5

**Lesson Goals** – By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

1. Describe the role of the Shema in Israel.
2. Identify ways we can follow the command to love God.
3. Develop strategies to teach children about God's love.
4. Discover how the Trinity is presented in the Old Testament.

**Teaching Strategies**

1. How do we know when someone has heard what we said? Apply these answers to the Hebraic understanding of "to hear" (to hear is to do).

2. Have students brainstorm ways they can help others understand the Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
3. Examine ways in which America's response to global warming does/does not reflect the command to love God. (Provide newspaper articles or web information):

<https://environmentamerica.org/programs/ame/global-warming-solutions>

<https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2018/02/climate-museum-new-york/552335/>

### **Resources:**

- Learn about the Shema from an online encyclopedia, Judaism 101: <http://www.jewfaq.org/shemaref.htm>
- Hebrew for Christians, Christians insight into the Shema: [http://www.hebrew4christians.com/Scripture/Torah/The\\_Shema/the\\_shema.html](http://www.hebrew4christians.com/Scripture/Torah/The_Shema/the_shema.html)
- Class can sing Hymn #25 “Holy, Holy, Holy” (AME Hymnal) — focus on the last line of the first verse, “God in Three Persons, Blessed Trinity.”
- The Shema sung in Hebrew read in English: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KFMHywBewzl>
- The Bible Project gives an overview of the Shema, its word origins and other biblical references: <https://thebibleproject.com/blog/what-is-the-shema>

## **Intermediate**

### **OUR LOVE FOR GOD**

## **UNIT I: God Commands Our Love, Respect, And Obedience**

**Lesson 1****December 2, 2018****First Sunday of Advent - Hope****Love and Devotion****LESSON SCRIPTURE:** Deuteronomy 6:1-9**FOCUS SCRIPTURE:** Deuteronomy 6:1-9**KEY VERSE:** You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Deuteronomy 6:5**LESSON GOALS**

The goals of this lesson are to:

1. Understand God's command to love God completely.
2. Examine how the "Shema" was passed down to the New Testament.
3. Identify ways to teach others to love God.

**VOCABULARY**

- **Commandment** – a command; instruction
- **Devotion** – love, loyalty, or enthusiasm for a person, activity, or cause
- **Observe** – notice or perceive (something) and register it as being significant
- **Love** – human love for another, includes family love; to have affection toward
- **Shema** – "to hear"

**TEACHING STRATEGIES****1. Introduction**

**Discuss:** What actions demonstrate you love someone?  
*Use an easel, Power Point or white board to write all the*

*answers shared by participants.* **Define:** Define what the word “devotion” means. Webster defines it as “the act of dedicating something to a cause.”

**Explain:** Love is a complex and often misunderstood word. Today's lesson focuses on Moses' obedience to God to remind Israel of the importance of teaching their children and future generations to obey, fear, and love God. **Read:** The Key Verse, ask students if they have heard the key verse before and if so, where. *As part of our African Methodist heritage, we repeat the key verse in our Decalogue Summary as part of worship.* **Share:** Share with students why our practice of including the Decalogue in worship is our ancestors' way of reminding us today to remember what God commanded the children of Israel, in the book of Deuteronomy.

## 2. Bible Story

**Explain:** Deuteronomy 6 is known by the Jewish culture as the “Shema,” which means “to hear.” Judaism still recites the Shema twice a day, in the morning and in the evening to ensure their children and future generations remember what God commanded. **Activity:** Ask participants to hold up their Bible (some Bibles are tablets or smartphones); if a person doesn't have a Bible, have them share. Say the scriptures one by one, allowing participants time to locate the text. The first one to find the text should raise his or her hand, be acknowledged, and then read the verse(s). *Alternative:* If you are in an area and Bibles aren't available, read the scriptures out loud to participants. **Ask:** What do these scriptures say about loving God? Is loving God an option? Is loving God something God expects? **Explain:** Loving God is a command. God told Moses in Deuteronomy 6 to remind Israel of the importance of loving God and to make sure it is shared for generations. The command is shared repeatedly in the Gospel and in Paul's letters to the church, and we are still sharing it today.

### 3. Life Application

**Discuss:** Loving God with our whole being, completely.

**Share:** A little girl decided she needed a companion, so she built a doll. The doll was beautiful and looked just like her. She programmed the doll to do all the fun things that the little girl liked doing. The doll would comb the other dolls' hair. The doll watched all the Disney shows with the little girl. The doll even laughed at all the girl's jokes. One day, the little girl looked at her doll and said, "I love you" and the doll did not respond. The little girl then asked her parents, "Why didn't the doll respond?" The parents asked the child, "Did you program the doll to respond?" The little girl was sad and said, "No." Then the little girl looked at her mom and asked, "Did you program me to say, 'I love you?'"

**Ask:** Based on our lesson and discussion on love, the actions of the doll appeared as actions of someone who loved the little girl; however, the doll could only do what it was programmed to do. Are we like dolls to God? **Explain:** Affirm the answers from the participants who stated we are not like dolls; and, God does not program us. We love God because we *know* God. **Ask:** How can we share with others ways that they can love God?

**Alternative:** Before class, take a soda can and empty it by placing a small hole in the bottom. Make sure the hole is not noticeable to others. Place the can near you when you start the discussion. Share with students how much you enjoy a good can of drink (soda, juice, etc.). **Talk:** Explain how much you love a can of soda/juice (canned drink, pop, etc.); then share how much you like it when your drink is shaken up really well. (Start shaking the can, shake it really hard.) Emphasize how good a well-shaken can is, and how excited you become when you consider opening the can (Point the can toward students as you shake it up.). Again, talk about your love for this can and its content. (If students start moving away, ask why they are moving.) Students will explain they don't want what's in your can all over them. OPEN the can. **Explain:**

The can is like your heart; whatever is on the inside is what will come out when opened. You can only love God with your entire being when there is love within you. If you don't have love, you cannot love God with all of your heart, mind, or soul because it's not in you.

#### 4. Summary

**Explain:** Deuteronomy 6 is known as the Shema; and, Jewish families currently read it as a reminder of God's promises. We should never forget God's law nor teaching others about that law. We must tell future generations about God's love and our responsibility to obey and love God and others. **Assign** eight participants or four (depending on class size) to read the corresponding scriptures. **Read** Matthew 22:37; 23:5; Mark 12:29-30, 32-33; Luke 10:27; Romans 3:30; 1 Corinthians 8:4; Ephesians 6:4. **Explain** per God's command to Moses, through generations people were taught God's command—it's in the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke), Paul's letters to the churches (Rome, Corinth, and Ephesus). Today, we continue to teach God's law to people as ascribed in the scripture.

### Advent

The season of Advent, which comes from the Latin word *adventus* meaning "coming" or "visit," begins four Sundays before Christmas and ends on Christmas Eve. Advent is the beginning of the liturgical year for Christians.

Advent is our time of preparation for the promised Messiah. We reflect on the promise of God for a Messiah who comes with forgiveness, salvation, and a new beginning. Advent moves us to look back and celebrate the birth of Jesus, as well as to look forward to the second coming of Christ as the fulfillment of all that was promised by Christ's first coming.



## All About Advent

Advent is part of the church's liturgical seasons that includes Christmas, and Epiphany, all related to the coming of Jesus. That cycle is followed by Lent, Easter, and the season of Pentecost (the longest season of the liturgical year). We repeat this cycle every year.

The color for Advent has traditionally been purple, but some use blue. The AMEC Book of Worship upholds the traditional color of purple for Advent, signifying penitence and royalty; yet our flexibility to cultural context allows blue, the color of hope.

Chrismon tree with its white monograms (<https://www.whychristmas.com/customs/chrismons.shtml>), the Jesse tree, Advent calendars, trumpets (for Isaiah), the messianic rose, star of Jacob, and fleur-de-lis are all symbols of Advent. The Advent wreath holds five candles: 3 purple, 1 pink, and 1 white (the large center candle), the "Christ Candle" which we light on Christmas Day. Each Sunday a candle is lit. Some churches light this candle on the last Sunday of Advent if no worship service is held on Christmas Day. If there is no Christmas service, congregants are given a small white candle (representing Jesus, the light of the world) to take home and light on Christmas Day. The other candles represent the themes around hope, peace, love, and joy. We may sing a hymn and use a responsive reading or prayer when the candle(s) is/are lit. All are based on each Sunday's theme of Hope, Peace, Joy, Love.

- First Sunday: Hope (purple candle)
- Second Sunday: Peace (purple candle)
- Third Sunday: Joy (pink candle)
- Fourth Sunday: Love (purple candle)

Resource for Advent readings, songs and scriptures: <http://www.theafricanamericanlectionary.org>

## THE LITURGICAL YEAR

**WHITE** - This is the color of perfection, glory, holiness, and joy. In the African Methodist Episcopal Church and some other denominations, white is used on Communion Sundays. White is also used on the joyous and great festival days of the Godhead such as Christmas Day, and during the Easter season (the Sundays after Easter). Many of our churches use white for weddings.

**RED** - This is the color of blood. It reminds us of the blood of Christ which was shed for the forgiveness of the sins of all of humankind. Red is used during Holy Week from Palm Sunday through Maundy Thursday. Red is also the color of fire and represents fervor, zeal, victory, and triumph. Red is used during the Pentecost season to mark the birth of Christ's church on earth. Some churches use red throughout the Pentecost season, which starts fifty days after Easter and goes to beginning of Advent (Four Sundays before Christmas). Some pastors use red for Pentecost Sunday only and not during the entire Pentecost season.

**GREEN** - This is the color of life and signifies growth. Green may be used for the Sundays after the Pentecost (sometimes called the Trinity season).

**PURPLE** - This is the color of preparation and of penitence. Purple is used during the seasons of Advent and Lent.

**BLACK** - This is the color of deep sorrow and darkness. Black also reminds us of death or the end of life. Black is used only on Good Friday to remind us of Jesus' death and humiliation on the cross.

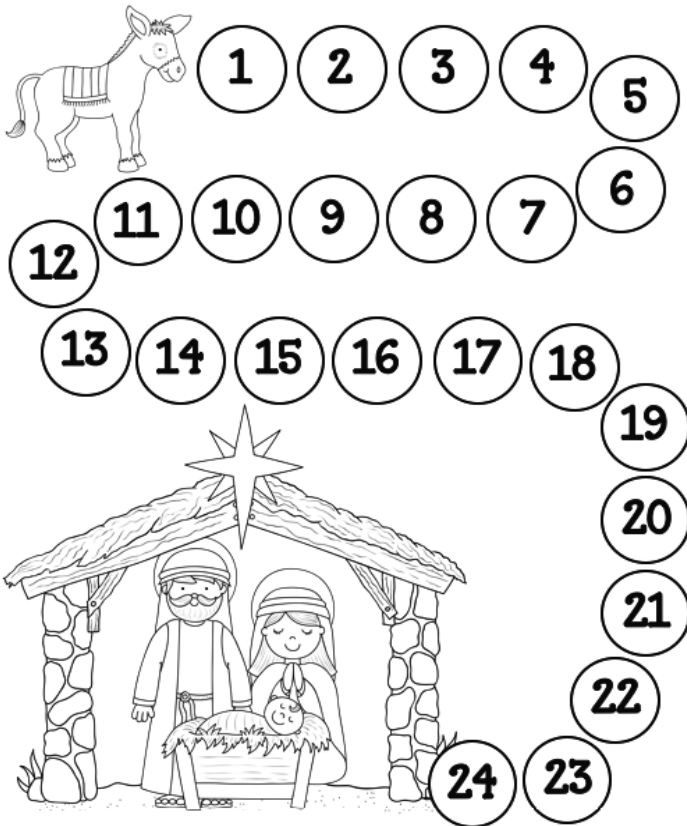
**BLUE** - This is simply the color of hope. The hope of the coming and long-awaited Messiah. Blue is now being used, in some churches, as the color for the Advent season.

### Advent Activity:

#### 24 Days of Kindness

1. Volunteer at a homeless shelter
2. Encourage someone to smile
3. Call someone you rarely call
4. Post a note of encouragement on social media, send a text message or write a letter
5. Pay someone's parking meter fee
6. Donate food to a food bank/pantry
7. Plant a tree
8. Send flowers to someone unexpectedly
9. Write a thank you note to your parents
10. Compliment someone
11. Place a **nice** note or quote in a car window in the church parking lot or street parking
12. Share music that makes you smile with someone else
13. Bake or purchase cookies to share with someone
14. Hug a friend
15. Fix or take someone to breakfast
16. Write a thank you note to your pastor
17. Give a fruit basket
18. Pick up trash around the church, your home, or the school
19. Offer someone your seat for a better view or allow someone to step in front of you in line
20. Donate a book to the library
21. Hold the door for someone
22. Read a book to a child
23. Pay for a person's purchase (leave \$10 or \$20 with the cashier for the other person's purchase); if in drive thru, just pay for that person's order
24. Bring a gift to someone you don't really know.

## ON MY WAY TO BETHLEHEM



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Create your own Christmas journey sheet to place a mark along your journey. You can take a sheet of paper and create a pathway from the first day of December to Christmas – Use your imagination in creating your journey sheet.

### Resources:

Paper, pens/pencils

Junior

Our Love for God

Unit I: God Commands Our Love and Obedience

**Lesson 1****December 2, 2018****Love and Devotion****Lesson Scripture:** Deuteronomy 6:1-9; Matthew 22:37-40**Focus Scripture:** Deuteronomy 6:1-9; Matthew 22:37-40**Key Verse:** You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Deuteronomy 6:5**Lesson Goals** – By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

1. Explore the many things the Jewish people in today's lessons were to do to make sure they knew and kept the commandment to love God.
2. Discover ways that students can remind themselves and others of why it's so important for human beings to love God.
3. Understand how students can show God they love and respect God in the various places where they spend their time.

**Word Power!!!**

- **Statutes** – Rules.
- **Ordinances** – Laws.
- **Fear** – Respect.
- **Soul** – The inner most part of a person.

**Teaching Strategies**

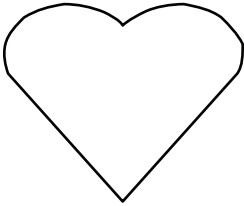
- **Activity #1** – Have students create three separate “I Will Love God With All My....” flash cards to remind themselves that they are to love God with all their heart, soul, and might. Students should write the words themselves on the lined side of each card, and then draw, describe, or use a cutout image on the unlined side of each card.

• **Activity #2 – The “Why” and the “How” answers –**

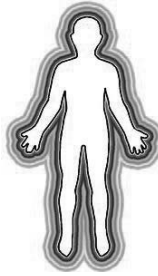
|   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Repeat them to your children.                          | H |
| 2. You'll be able to respect God for as long as you live. | W |
| 3. Things will go well with you in your new home.         | W |
| 4. Tie them on your hand.                                 | H |
| 5. Write them on your gates.                              | H |
| 6. You'll grow into a great nation.                       | W |

Here are some suggested images for the flash cards:

Heart



Soul



Might



**Resources:** Lined 3x5 index cards; “heart” cutout, “soul” cutout, “might” cutout; pencils/pens

## Liberating Faith Studies

### Lesson 2

December 9, 2018

### Choose to Love and Serve the Lord

**Devotional Reading:** Psalm 81

**Lesson Scripture:** Exodus 20:1-11; Joshua 24

**Focus Scripture:** Joshua 24:1-3a (ending with “many”), 13-15, 21-24

**Key Verse:** “Choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.” Joshua 24:15

**Lesson Goals** – By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

1. Develop an understanding of the importance and seriousness of making a commitment to serve God.
2. Identify life events that tempt people to turn from God.
3. Recognize the many ways God has blessed people with gifts they did not earn.
4. List ways that individuals, families, and church communities can serve the Lord.

### Teaching Strategies

- What are outward signs/behaviors that let others know a family is committed to serving the Lord?
- Ask students to share times that they had to decide whether or not they would serve the Lord. Examples: Given too much change for a purchase, waiting for an answer to prayer.
- Evaluate current trends in worship and church attendance in the United States.  
News clip: <https://religionnews.com/2018/08/01/why-fewer->

americans-are-attending-religious-services/

- Review current trends in church growth on the continent of Africa.

Article: The phenomenal rise of Christians in Africa – <http://www.theafricareport.com/News-Analysis/the-phenomenal-rise-of-christians-in-africa.html>

and Interactive map – <http://www.pewforum.org/interactives/global-christianity/#/africa,ALL>

### Resources:

- Read background book of Joshua.  
<http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/8907-joshua-book-of>
- Making time for God every day.  
<https://www.cru.org/us/en/train-and-grow/spiritual-growth/devotionals/a-daily-time-with-the-lord.html>
- Have class listen to and learn song “As for Me and My House” (Ron Kenoly).  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t2w\\_pGMVR-o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t2w_pGMVR-o)
- Suggestions for families to serve the Lord together.  
<https://www.cornerstonesforparents.com/serving-god-family-1-chronicles>

## Intermediate

Lesson 2

December 9, 2018

### ***Second Sunday of Advent - Peace***

#### **Choose to Love and Serve God**

**LESSON SCRIPTURE:** Exodus 20:1-11; Joshua 24

**FOCUS SCRIPTURE:** Joshua 24:1-3 (ending with “many”), 13-15, 21-24

**KEY VERSE:** “Choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River



or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.” Joshua 24:15

## LESSON GOALS

The goals of this lesson are to:

1. Serve God and not idols.
2. Repent for making other things our gods.
3. Respond to Joshua's challenge to serve God wholeheartedly.

## VOCABULARY

- **Idols** – an image or representation of a god used as an object of worship
- **Worship** – the feeling or expression of reverence and adoration for a deity
- **Ancestor** – a person, typically one more remote than a grandparent, from whom one is descended
- **Chariot** – a two-wheeled horse-drawn vehicle used in ancient warfare and racing
- **Possess** – have, own; take for one's own
- **Witness** – a person who sees an event, typically a crime or accident, take place; a person giving sworn testimony to a court of law or the police

## TEACHING STRATEGIES

1. **Lesson Introduction:** Today's lesson presents Joshua reminding Israel of their loyalty to other gods and not worshipping the true God. Israel's ancestors were guilty of spending time with other gods, worshipping other gods, and following the gods of foreign nations. Joshua affirms where he stood in his relationship to God.

**Ask:** Does anyone have a pet? Depending on the response, if participants have a pet ask how much time does he/she

spend with their pet? If no pet, ask if there is a favorite sport or activity he/she participates in, then ask, how much time does he/she spend practicing for the activity?

**Discuss:** How pets and activities take up a lot of time and require a whole lot of our attention. Have you ever considered that sometimes we can become so involved in things or activities that it consumes our time and resources?

**Alternative:** Have students use the “*What Is It Worth to You?*” sheet in their books, and have them bid on each item on the sheet. Once participants have placed their bids, read each line and ask if their bid is higher than 40, and work your way down to get to the highest bid. Example, if you ask if the bid is higher than 40 and students have their hands up, then ask, higher than 45, until you get to the highest bid. If no one raises his or her hand at 40, go down by 10’s, anyone higher than 30, etc., until you find the highest bid.

## 2. Bible Story

**Explain:** The site where Joshua speaks with Israel is Shechem. Shechem is where Joshua led Israel to renew their covenant with God (Joshua 8:30-35; Deuteronomy 11:29-30; 27:11-26). Shechem was not new to Israel, there is a history with Israel and Shechem (Genesis 12:6; 33:18-19; 35:4; 37:12-14).

**Explain:** When we read the Bible, we see the story unfolding from book to book; however, there were many years between the books of the Bible. From Genesis where Father Abraham was called to the renewal of the covenant which Joshua is now calling them to, centuries had passed; not just a few years but hundreds of years. They probably had forgotten what God had said.

## 3. Life Application

“The Value of Time”: Ask students to use the time sheets in their books to identify how they will use their time. **Remind:** Remind participants that this is an honest examination of how

they choose to use their time. It is of no benefit if we give time to what we think we should do, instead of what we *actually* do.

**Ask:** Allow participants time to think about their choices, and then ask, “What received the largest amount of your time?” Allow students time to share their answers. Ask participants, “How important is it to spend time with God?” Expect answers like, “very important,” “important,” and you may have someone who indicates, “not important.” For those who think it’s not important, please share the scripture indicating that God is jealous (Deuteronomy 32:16; Deuteronomy 6:15; Joshua 24:19). **Ask:** Are you expected to do your chores? Your homework? Then ask, why? Allow time for participants to share, and then ask, “Does God have the same expectation of your time? Is devoting time to God as necessary as doing your chores, homework, or spending time with family?”

**Explain:** God is a jealous God and scriptures remind us of the consequences of worshipping other gods. We should be careful when we put other things and people before God. *God first* is the first of the Ten Commandments, “I am the Lord, God, thou shall have NO OTHER gods before me” (emphasis added).

#### 4. Summary

**Explain:** There is only one God and we are called to worship and serve God and God alone. Joshua reminds Israel that worshipping idol gods is unacceptable and comes with consequences. Joshua then makes a statement that affirms his conviction, “As for me and my house, we shall serve the Lord.” When we look at how we choose to spend our time, we should always consider how much time we are devoting to God and whether we have placed God first.

**Ask:** What idols do we create? (Family members, famous people, things we treasure, etc.)

## 5. Activity: My Advent Promise

If time permits, allow students to do this activity, or ask them to complete it during the week.

Resource:

- Idol gods – Baker's Dictionary - <https://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionaries/bakers-evangelical-dictionary/idol-idolatry.html>
- Image of God – Bible Project - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YbipxLDtY8c>
- Article on idolatry – *Christianity Today* - <https://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2014/october/idolatry-is-alive-today-why-modern-church-leaders-still-fig.html>

**Resources:** “What Is It Worth to You?” sheet and “The Value of Time”; pens/pencils

### Junior

#### Lesson 2

December 9, 2018

#### Choose to Love and Serve God

**Lesson Scripture:** Exodus 20:1-11; Joshua 24

**Focus Scripture:** Joshua 24:1-3 [ending with “many”], 13-15, 21-24

**Key Verse:** “As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.” Joshua 24:15b.

**Lesson Goals** – By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

1. Learn why it's important for everyone to be given a chance to choose to love and serve God for themselves.
2. Be able to compare the choice the Israelites make to connect to loving and serving God to rededicating oneself to Christ.
3. Explore the details of this second rededication ceremony at Shechem.

## Word Power!!!

- **Shechem** (pronounced *Shek-um*) – The place where Joshua and the Israelites renewed their covenant to love and serve God when they first entered the promised land.
- **Revere** – Respect.
- **Incline** – Turn towards by leaning in close.
- **Covenant** – A binding agreement between two parties.
- **Amorites** – Group of people on the east side of the Jordan who worshipped other gods.

## Teaching Strategies

- Kid-friendly maps of the 12 tribes of Israel can be found at the following websites: 1) <http://newyorkjewishguide.com/2013/04/25/prophecy-in-ancient-israel>; 2) <https://www.pinterest.com/missbecky75/bible-canaan/>
- Maps of Shechem can be found at the following websites: 1) <http://www.keyway.ca/htm2009/20090705.htm>; 2) <https://dwellingintheword.wordpress.com/2010/07/14/313-judges-9/>
- In advance of the class, consult with the pastor to explore the possibilities of allowing students to reaffirm their baptismal covenant, and use the “Reaffirmation of Baptismal Covenant” liturgy from the AME Book of Worship as a guide.
- **Activity #1 – Choose Well** answers: SERVE FAITHFULLY; REVERE THE LORD; ANCESTORS; AMORITES; HOUSEHOLD; SHECHEM; WITNESSES; FOREIGN GODS  
ME AND MY FAMILY ARE STICKING WITH GOD NO MATTER WHAT. (“As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.” Joshua 24:15b.)

**Resources:** Kid-friendly map of Shechem; kid-friendly map of the twelve tribes of Israel during Joshua's time; AME Book of Worship; pencils/pens