



# Director's Guide

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# About This Material

Inside this resource, you'll discover fully reproducible material designed to help children (and their families) grow in faith through musical and artistic expression. The content was inspired by Mark Burrows' musical for children's choirs, *Called* – a story of how God has put something beautiful in everyone and is calling us all to share our gifts with the world. This resource highlights four (unison/two-part) songs from the musical and includes demo tracks and reproducible singer's scores for distribution. The musical's imagery, language, and music are used here in new ways to spark creativity, innovation, and conversation.

Four main themes from the musical became the building blocks for four content modules. These modules can be used over the course of a week (one module per day) – or over the course of a month (one module per week).

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# Using This Resource

The flexibility of this resource gives leaders many options for use. The entirety can be utilized for an in-person event or for an at-home experience.

- Use this as a week-long Music & Arts Camp.
- Use this as a week-long VBS.
- Use this as a month-long family faith-formation initiative, spanning four weeks in the spring, summer, or fall.
- Incorporate the activity and devotional material into your children's choir rehearsals.
- Use the modules as a 4-week Sunday School thematic block about God's Call/ Discovering Our Gifts.
- Use this material with your choir before producing *Called* (the musical) – introducing the theme & music to your children before rehearsals begin.
- Use this material concurrently with *Called* rehearsals – providing artistic expression and faith formation as you learn your lines & blocking.
- Use this as a follow-up enrichment experience after performing *Called* with your children's choir.

The four modules are a starting point – a springboard. Though they are fully complete, you might wish to add more activities. Peruse the **Creativity Bank** at the end of this guide and select additional activities you wish to use during your event. Or – simply provide families with a copy of the Creativity Bank to support learning at home.

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# Curriculum Overview

This curriculum is a flexible collection of creative and artistic expressions. Here are brief descriptions of the activities included with each module.

## Bible Beats



It all begins here – with a meaningful biblical text set to rhythm. The simple Bible Beat rhythm is ideal for a wide variety of ages. Young children are concrete thinkers and this activity not only allows the children to hear the rhythm, but feel it and see it, too. Each of the four Bible Beats works together in a percussion groove, and older children may have fun layering the parts together as they become comfortable with the beats.

*What do you use to play the Bible Beat?* Well, start with voices only – and chant the text in rhythm. Next, add body percussion and ask the children to pat their lap or their chest as they speak in rhythm. For even more fun, add some instruments.

*What if we don't have drums?* A quick lap around the church (or kitchen or garage) will result in some handy percussion instruments. Try these out:

- A coffee can
- A 5-gallon bucket
- An empty ice cream pail
- Sandpaper
- A shoe box
- An oatmeal canister
- A cookie sheet
- An empty laundry detergent bottle

## Songs



The four songs featured in this resource come directly from the musical *Called*. Through *Called*, children discover how God can - and will - call anyone. The message of this musical reassures us that God has placed something beautiful in everyone and is calling on us to share it with the world.

These catchy melodies and meaningful rhymes will provide a wonderful soundtrack for your event. Distribute the audio files to your families and encourage them to play the soundtrack at home.

## Science Experiments



Hands-on activities help children see and explore and learn. Through simple physics experiments, participants will see movement and chain reactions - showing how one small act can lead to change. These fun learning activities will lead to great discussions at church and at home, reinforcing the important themes of *Called*.

## Creative Experiences

*Creating* is a wonderful way to express feelings, capture wonder, and appreciate beauty. The creative experiences in this resource don't require fancy supplies. They are designed to be intuitive – using what you have on hand to craft something with purpose and meaning.

## Small Group Games

The games featured in this resource are simple, creative, and fun. With very few items required (if any), these small-group games will help participants flex their creative & cooperative muscles – all while supporting the themes of the week.

## Worship

The worship experiences in this curriculum follow a familiar rhythm of worship: gathering together, proclaiming God's Word, responding to God's Word, and being sent forth. Each experience includes two of the featured songs from the *Called* musical, as well as some opportunities for families or small groups to share joys and concerns.

Our places of worship are special. They are sacred spaces – *set apart* for a special purpose. Great care is taken through art, architecture, lighting, symbolism, and music to curate an environment where we can feel genuinely close to God. Will you worship indoors or outdoors? What time of day will worship be held? How big is your assembled group? Consider these details as you plan.

*If you are hosting an in-person event*, consider how you create your sacred space for worship. For a small group, you might mark this space with a big blanket where participants sit together. You could also keep a children's Bible nearby. A cross can be made from sticks fastened with yarn. Consider adding a candle or a clear bowl of water. Perhaps add a colored cloth to match the season of the church year. For larger groups, consider inviting smaller class (or family) groups to create special items to mark the space. You might create a large art project or mural (a thumbprint tree, a large heart filled with handprints) to hang at the front of the worship space.

*If you are hosting an at-home event*, encourage families to create a special sacred space in or around their home. A place that's *set apart*. It could be a corner of a room or a place near a window that overlooks nature. (Though preferably not a window that overlooks a street with cars going by frequently.) It could be an area around a firepit or in the corner of their yard. This sacred space can be utilized well beyond the end of this week. It could be a place where families always go for family prayers, to explore new Bible stories, or where individuals can go for some "alone time" with God. (Jesus did that a LOT.)

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# Suggested Sequence

The thematic material in this resource is designed to meet your needs - no matter if you're hosting a week-long event or a month-long unit. Present one module per day, one module per week, or customize as your schedule requires. Although we offer a suggested sequence below, you can also customize the module order to best fit your program.

#1:



## Hearing God's Call

God has put something beautiful in you and is calling you to share it with the world.

#2:



## Responding to God's Call

When Jesus calls you, say yes!

#3:



## Stand

Standing for love and kindness is one of the most powerful things we can do.

#4:



## Worthy

God will call you because you are worthy.

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# Planning an At-Home Event

An event hosted at a distance might involve fewer pieces to plan (no venue reservations or lunch volunteers needed), but your planning work is no less important. Here are a few tips for putting together a successful at-home event.

- Schedule your event as you would for an in-person event – avoid holiday weeks and calendar dates when families may be traveling. Check church and community calendars to avoid conflicts with other events involving your primary participant audience.
- Determine the registration procedure. Will you ask families to register online via your church website or an online form?
- Determine any program fees and how they'll be collected.
- Share news of your event to your local community and neighborhood groups on social media. This type of event may appeal to non-members of your church because they can engage in the material from the comfort of their home. Consider this a great outreach opportunity to your neighbors!
- Decide how you will package and distribute the supplies.
- Allow plenty of time to package the supplies with care. Pray for the participants and their families as you pack each set of supplies.
- Determine how you will engage your participants during the week and how creations might be shared among your group – as well as with your broader church family. (See the *Building Community* section for more tips.)

## What do I provide participants for an at-home event?

- Share the Family Guide with each family. This brief guide is designed to provide grownups a helpful overview of the activities while cheering them on to find a balanced family rhythm. If parents feel stressed by the task of shepherding kids through this resource, the Family Guide reassures them they are capable (and creative, too!).
- Be sure each family has access to the four modules. Make hard copies available or distribute the PDFs. Don't forget the song pages!
- Share the song MP3 files. Create a private soundcloud playlist for your participants or send the actual audio files via Dropbox, WeTransfer, or another file-sharing method.

*The purchase of this resource includes the license to reproduce the content and/or distribute the digital audio files and documents to participants.*

- Consider providing any materials participants will need: chalk, string, balloons, etc. Everything on your supply list can be found at your local store.

*A complete supply list is provided at the end of this Guide.*

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# Daily Rhythm (At-Home Event)

One of the temptations when organizing an event filled with at-home activities is to create a sample schedule for parents to follow or recreate.

*Avoid this temptation.*

The curriculum activities are designed to accompany a family's daily rhythm. A Bible Beat to begin the day with purpose. A simple creative project when children and parents are feeling inspired. A science experiment to share during outdoor play. A game to engage the pre-meal energy. A family worship experience to end the day. And a musical soundtrack to accompany any type of activity.

Adopt a *less-is-more* approach regarding the schedule. Allow breathing room for creativity to flourish naturally. The freedom to determine a rhythm that works for them is a gift to families.

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# Building Community

Whether you plan to host a communal Music & Arts event or support families at home, it is good to find ways to build community and share our creations with each other.

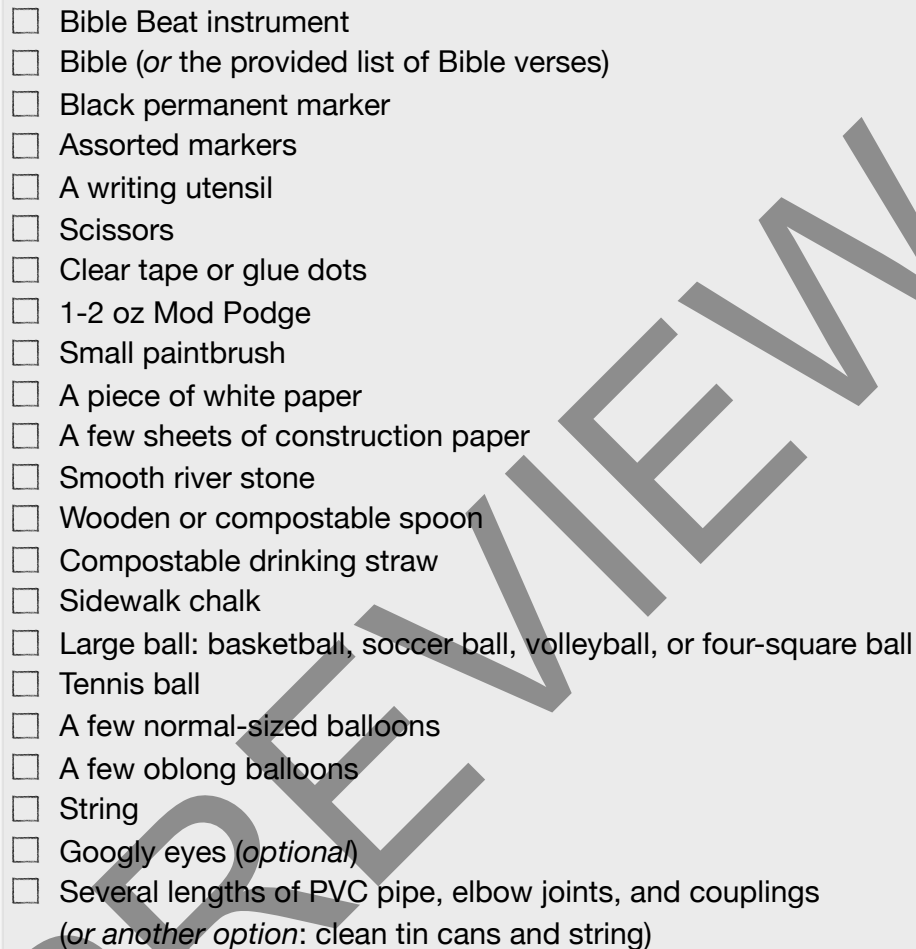
Consider gathering home participants together in a brief Zoom meeting at the beginning or end of the day. This connection point can allow participants to talk about the day's theme and activities, share their creations, sing the songs, and play the Bible Beat. You might also create a private Facebook group for this event, encouraging participants to post pictures, reflections, or activities their family really enjoyed.

Consider ways to involve your larger congregation in an at-home event. Post updates on the church website or social media detailing each new theme and share pictures (only with proper permission) of families creating, playing, and worshipping together. Invite your congregation to pray for the participants. Utilize portions of the modules (like the worship prayers) in your congregational communications throughout the duration of your event.

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# Supply List

Here are the supplies each participant will need for the four module units.

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- Bible Beat instrument
  - Bible (or the provided list of Bible verses)
  - Black permanent marker
  - Assorted markers
  - A writing utensil
  - Scissors
  - Clear tape or glue dots
  - 1-2 oz Mod Podge
  - Small paintbrush
  - A piece of white paper
  - A few sheets of construction paper
  - Smooth river stone
  - Wooden or compostable spoon
  - Compostable drinking straw
  - Sidewalk chalk
  - Large ball: basketball, soccer ball, volleyball, or four-square ball
  - Tennis ball
  - A few normal-sized balloons
  - A few oblong balloons
  - String
  - Googly eyes (optional)
  - Several lengths of PVC pipe, elbow joints, and couplings  
(or another option: clean tin cans and string)

## Creative Tips for Packaging/Delivering Supplies for Home Use

- Pack the supplies in a small bucket (or bag) for each participant and arrange a no-contact doorstep drop or a drive-by supply pick-up at the church. Gather participants in an online Zoom meeting to “unpack” your buckets together. (Bonus: The buckets can be repurposed as rhythm instruments for Bible Beats!)
- Place each module in a sealed envelope. Imagine the excitement each morning as families open the new day’s adventures!
- We’ve included all the art files for your use. Use the icons to print a sticker page for the children as a fun surprise.
- Write a personal note to each participant and include this along with the supplies.



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# Creativity Bank

These additional activities inspire creativity and wonder while reinforcing important Bible concepts. Supplement the module material with any of the Creativity Bank activities.

## Rest Game

**This activity complements the theme of Module #1.**

Our lives keep getting busier. The world keeps getting noisier. How can we possibly hear God's call? In music we have something to help restore balance – the rest. A rest is *not* the absence of music, but simply the absence of sound.

Have the children join you in clapping a steady beat in 4/4 time at a medium-fast tempo. After several measures, stop.

*Say: Let's try that again, this time resting on beats 2 and 4 of each measure.*

Have the children clap with you on beats 1 and 3 of each measure, observing the rests on beats 2 and 4. After several measures stop.

*Say: Let's try that again, this time adding a rest on beat 3 as well.*

Have the children clap with you on beat 1 of each measure, observing the rests on beats 2, 3, and 4. After several measures stop.

*Say: Now things are about to get interesting. Let's clap on beat 1, followed by **seven** beats of rest. Seems simple enough right? Here we go.*

Have the children clap with you on beat 1 of a measure, followed by seven beats of rest before clapping again. In other words, you're clapping one downbeat every two measures. Do this for several measures, then stop.

Reflect with your singers. Did everyone clap at the same time? Did some clap early? Late? (Usually people tend to clap on the early side.) Remember, a rest is the absence of sound, but the beat keeps going. The music keeps going. We must listen to the music *inside us* to help keep from rushing to fill that beautiful silence with sound too early.

Now, try it again. Have the children clap with you on beat 1 of a measure, followed by seven beats of rest before clapping again. Do this over and over until the group starts to get more in sync. You can invite the children to bounce their open hands for the seven beats of rest, so they can feel the pulse. And if the children start to get good at this, try one clap every three measures. Then every four measures.

*Say: We are a choir. We join together to sing our thanks and praise to God. But we can also praise God in the silence. Let's spend one minute, exactly sixty seconds, in silence as we offer our thanks and praise to God.*

Note: In our modern world, sixty seconds of intentional silence is a rare gift. Consider making time for this in every rehearsal.