



RISE UP AND BUILD

BIBLE BOOK BOX

QUARTERLY INITIATIVE

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

Updated 1.30.23

Why a Bible Book Box?

The Bible Book Box project may be a valuable avenue to promote the spiritual growth of current members and Sunday school students, growth of the ecclesia through outreach, and the strengthening of the connection between those attending in person and those on Zoom.

This prototype, focusing on children's books, can connect neighborhood children and their families with positive, wholesome reading material and a contact point with the Bible's message and an ecclesia. In addition, it has the added benefit of actively involving the Sunday school members and the whole ecclesia in Bible-related reading, selecting materials, and reaching out to others with the good news of the kingdom of God.

This prototype's focus on children's literature is only one example of implementation. However, other approaches may also be well-suited to this effort. According to a [2020 article](#) about the worldwide success of Little Free Libraries (now numbering over 100,000 [in 108 countries](#)), "in general, kids' books are the first ones to go."

For those unfamiliar with the little library concept, enter your address on the linked map to see which Little Free Libraries are near you (littlefreelibrary.org/map).



Inviting the ecclesial family to "rise up and build."

There are rich Scriptural examples of individuals contributing to an effort to produce an outcome not possible otherwise: (Exodus 25:1-8, Exodus 35:4-10, Judges 5:9, 1 Chronicles 29:9, Ezra 2:68).

Brothers and sisters, Sunday school students young and old, and interested friends have diverse talents and insights that can enrich the work. There are opportunities to involve members still waiting to return to meeting after COVID and those who attend in person. The contributions include goods and services.

Prayer

A Hebrew expression for “library” is “house of books.” ... Except the LORD build the house, they labor in vain that build it (Psalm 127:1). The whole Ecclesia and Sunday school may participate by seeking God’s guidance and blessing on the work; this is an opportunity for young and old to be “knit together in love” and to “do all things heartily, as unto the Lord.”

Application Process

Interested Ecclesias may contact WCF to apply for funding to meet the costs of the initial outlay, including the physical library and an introductory selection of books. To apply, fill out the web form on the Rise Up and Build page at wcfoundation.org.

Steward Role

The “Steward” of the Bible book box is a pivotal position. The Steward will be selected to oversee the overall implementation and operation, the “care and feeding” of the box, and the Ecclesial coordination of related activities. The Steward (and the Steward’s assistants) will be responsible for the quality and integrity of the collection per the selection guidelines as noted in **Appendix 1**. This will involve responsibility for the box and its collection through regularly scheduled monitoring of the box, the physical book collection, and the Title List (see below). Selection Guidelines will be modified by the Steward as needed. This role could rotate on a quarterly/yearly basis as required. The Steward will ideally involve Sunday school students, Zoomers, and in-person attendees in the project and liaise with other Bible book box ecclesial Stewards.

Installation

Bible book boxes, or kits to make one, can be ordered from multiple sources, including the following:

- *Canadian supplier:* [Stuckey’s Woodworking](#)
- *U.S. suppliers:* [Etsy](#), [Wall to Wall Woodworks](#)

The Bible book box installation will require some manual labor. A [supporting post](#), also available from home improvement stores, will provide a base. Check with local utilities first if digging. For areas with pedestrians passing by, consider adding a motion sensor light for evening traffic. Passersby should have enough light to view the Bible book box and its contents. You might also consider handicapped access. Optionally, an [automatic counter](#) can be installed to provide an idea of usage.

[This video](#) advises how to site the unit, including watching out for utility lines. [Other helpful advice](#) can be found at the Little Free Library site.

Painting (and construction of kit libraries, if that option is selected)

This is an opportunity for artistic handiwork in painting a Bible book box that will attract passers-by. It should be inviting in appearance, to encourage pedestrians to stop and look.

As many ecclesias have members who continue to “Zoom” rather than attend in person, this may be a portion of the project where these individuals could use their design and artistic talents, in companionship with some of the Sunday school students.

The artwork will be “touched up” as needed over time. ([This link](#) shows secular neighborhood images with creative artwork)

Each ecclesia receiving a grant will also receive a metallic engraved sticker to attach to the box identifying it to the public. The sticker says, “Bible Book Box: All books are provided by our church for you. Please do not leave your own books.” Each ecclesia is free to use this label or use an alternative.

Reading

Since this prototype Bible book box project is for children’s materials, it’s an opportunity for Sunday school students as well as older ecclesial family members, to select a favorite title to be included in the collection. With reading in decline, this is an engaging doorway to foster Bible-related reading in our young families. For example, as a class project, Sunday school students might do a short book report on why they are suggesting a title for the Bible book box. Samples from the list of books proposed for inclusion can be read and vetted by Zoom members, as well as in-person attendees. See **Appendix 2** for a selection of sources for book titles. New sources of books may be added to the Appendix document as needed.

The Bible book box Steward(s) will read and review the materials suggested for the unit to make sure they reflect the intent of this work in our Lord’s service, based on Selection Guidelines.

Selection Guidelines

The materials selected for this prototype will be chosen for a Bible book box audience of children. Bible-related material will be aligned with the teachings and values of the Scriptures. Content of Bible-related books should be accurate in facts, Scripture interpretation, and doctrine. Materials will be constructive in influence and morally sound.

Questions to consider when selecting materials include the age groups, the reading level, format (books, DVDs, puzzles, music etc.), The Bible book box Steward(s) will decide whether to include Christadelphian and non-Christadelphian authors, publishers, and vendors, etc. The book selection activities will be in line with budget allocation. Will all the material have a Bible connection? Will multiple copies of popular items be restocked on a set schedule? All these questions can be addressed through the selection guidelines. The selection guidelines can be modified as experience grows.

The Bible book box Steward will be responsible for the final selections for inclusion, and collaboration is encouraged to keep an arranging board member abreast of the project, as well as other interested members as needed. The selection guidelines will be modified as needed. See **Appendix 1** for Selection Guidelines.

Procurement

Once titles have been selected for inclusion, after review by the Steward, an electronic Title List will be generated. (If a book suggestion is declined for use in the collection, it will also be listed, along with a note as to why it was deemed not suitable.) This list will be continually updated as new items are added. The current Title List will serve as a resource for the materials that will need to be monitored as the box goes into circulation. The Title List will also be a potential resource to share with other ecclesias that wish to implement a Bible book box project. A [sample template](#) for a readily modifiable booklist is available free using Microsoft Excel.

Book orders will be placed on a routine basis to stock and replace items as necessary. A budget for the Bible book box materials should be established and observed for changes as needed. This could be done by the ecclesial librarian as advised by the Bible book box Steward(s). The WCF grant of \$600 will assist with some initial book purchases, to be followed by ecclesial funding to replenish the materials. A selection of links to purchase titles from Christadelphian and from non-Christadelphian sources is listed in **Appendix 2**.

Donations

As with any library, there are ongoing costs to procure new materials, and to replace lost or damaged materials. Ecclesial donations may be earmarked for this purpose or Sunday school students may wish to donate to provide a book they have read and enjoyed. This is an opportunity to model giving of our wealth to share the Good News with others. The budget for the books will be impacted by the return rate of the book collection. (Some ecclesias may choose to make the books available without requesting they be returned.) This will add to the budget outlay.

Bookplates/Cards

Each item in the Bible book box will be labeled with a bookplate or have a “business card” attached. The purpose of the bookplate / business card is to identify the item as coming from the Bible book box. It will include contact information, and the address of the ecclesia. Optionally, it may include a reminder to return the book, or to keep the book, or to pass the book along to someone else. It may also list the ecclesial website, an invitation to Sunday school, a Bible verse, etc. Production of the bookplate/business card may be done in-house with purchased blank labels or sent to an online printing site for production. Including an image of the ecclesial building or some artwork depicting a children’s Bible message will add to the attractiveness of the label /card and remind readers about its source. Another important function of the bookplate /card is to identify a title as part of the Bible book box collection, to distinguish it from books which may be added to the box by users, thus aiding in weeding unwanted titles.

Tips from Avery about designing book plates and business cards are available at avery.com/blog/what-are-bookplates/ and avery.com/templates/category/business-cards.

Bookmarks with a verse and contact information for the ecclesia:

This optional component can be designed in-house, using online examples for inspiration, or printed from various sources. Sunday school students can contribute bookmark art with a favorite verse. The bookmark message could be simple for children, or with an outline of the Bible hope for their parents/guardians. It could include a picture of the ecclesial building with contact information. Older students could be responsible for printing and laminating the art and trimming the bookmarks. (Lamination service is available at FedEx and other printing companies). The bookmark would serve as a keepsake contact piece, long after the book has been returned.

Online Bookmark tools:

- christadelphianadvocate.org/post/digital-download-memory-verse-bookmarks
- thechristadelphian.com/product-category/cards-posters-gifts/bookmarks/
- magnifyhimtogether.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/bookmarks-for-Psalm-book-3.pdf

- magnifyhimtogether.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Lunchbox-Bible-Notes.pdf
- biblestoryprintables.com/wp-content/uploads/BSP/BibleBookmarks/BooksoftheBible.pdf
- biblestoryprintables.com/wp-content/uploads/BSP/BibleBookmarks/FruitBookmarks.pdf

Monitoring and Maintenance

Because the box will be exposed to the weather, and to public traffic it will need to be monitored, on a regular schedule, for wear-and-tear, damage, [vandalism](#), and replenishment of materials. This will ensure that the unit remains attractive and relevant to its users and continues to reflect the Bible-based intentions of the project.

The Bible book box Steward's role will involve members of the ecclesia in this "check-in visit" activity, to deal with the condition of the box, as well as returned materials that are dirty, or damaged, or to take note of books that should be added to keep the book selections replenished. The contents of the Bible book box will be checked against the current Title List (see Procurement) to aid in deciding which titles need to be replaced.

It's important to be aware that users may introduce new books that do not support the selection guidelines for the Bible book box, and these will need to be weeded from the collection. Guidance on the bookplate label and/or on the box itself should instruct users NOT to add new items. This is a departure in protocol from the little library model and will need to be emphasized. The Bible book box Steward should ensure that monitors are familiar with guidelines for care of the box and its contents. This is another pathway for individuals in the ecclesia (physically present or Zooming) to engage.

Evaluation

After 2-3 months of implementation, and periodically thereafter, evaluate how the Bible book box is functioning. How often is the Bible book box door opened? ([An automatic counter](#) can be installed to tally this.) What materials need to be replaced on a regular basis? Which titles are not being borrowed? How often does the unit need repairs? Can other members of the ecclesia be added to the monitor list? Can a Sunday school class find new books to keep the collection fresh? Would it be useful to add a guest book for comments? There are opportunities for young and old, Zooming participants etc.

Lessons learned during the evaluation process can be shared with other Bible book box ecclesias, to celebrate successes and to provide advice to mitigate problems. This activity can foster inter-ecclesial communication, and support.

With God's blessing, the Bible book box project has the potential to enhance Sunday school students' engagement, connect Zoomers to ecclesial activity and provide a doorway for outreach to the neighborhood. As the day of our Lord's return is near, may we all rise up and build.

IMPORTANT NOTE: According to the Little Free Library website, (littlefreelibrary.org/start/build-a-little-free-library/) the name, Little Free Library, cannot be used legally on the box itself without registering with the organization. It may be prudent to avoid this since the ecclesial Bible book box will not operate in the same fashion.

Appendix 1 - Application form for an Ecclesial Bible book box Grant

A WCF financial grant is offered to ecclesias interested in installing and maintaining a Bible book box on their property, to provide an avenue for outreach to the community, as part of the Rise Up and Build initiative.

The funding will cover the initial cost of the installation, including a grant in the amount of \$600 USD for the purchase of the physical unit, and for an initial selection of books to be purchased by the ecclesia. See the Bible book box Implementation Guide for details of the project.

Appendix 1 - Selection Guidelines

- Bible-related material will be aligned with the teachings and values of the Scriptures. Content of included items should be accurate in facts, Scripture interpretation, and doctrine. Materials will be constructive in influence and morally sound.
- If materials are selected from commercial publishers, they will be read and screened for material contrary to Biblical teaching. In addition, content will be excluded if it contains inappropriate language, such as swearing, foul language, taking God's name in vain, promotion of behavior contrary to Biblical standards, etc.
- Books will contain easily understood materials that do not assume a high level of Biblical knowledge. (According to data from a 2022 report, Bible reading, and usage are at an all-time low in the United States, as detailed in the [American Bible Society's State of the Bible Survey](#).)
- From time-to-time the collection will be weeded to provide room for new material or to replace worn copies, and the electronic Title List will be updated to reflect the current collection.
- Items added to the Bible book box by public users will be removed from the Bible book box by the Steward/monitor. The Bible book box will prominently post that books may be borrowed from, but are NOT to be added to the collection.
- The rate of turnover of books will be monitored regularly to replace lost, or damaged items and add new titles as they are selected.
- If an individual wishes to donate materials to the Bible book box, the Steward will evaluate the material before inclusion. Specific recommendations for titles may be presented in writing to the Steward(s) for consideration.

Appendix 2 - Source Selection Guide

All items selected for the collection will be reviewed by the Steward.

There are numerous options for finding materials to stock the Bible book box including the following:

Christadelphian Sources for books which may then be evaluated in accordance with the Selection Guidelines:

- [Christadelphian Magazine website](#)
- [Christadelphian Sunday School Union](#)

- [Christadelphian Library \(U.S.\)](#)
- [Christadelphian Scripture Study Service books for children and teens](#)
- [Detroit Christadelphian Book Supply](#)
- [The Dawn Book Supply](#)
- [Magnify Him Together](#)
- [The Logos Bookshop](#)

Non-Christadelphian sources for book reviews and for book titles which may then be evaluated in accordance with the Selection Guidelines:

- [Baker Book House](#)
- [Aslan's Books](#)
- [Arch Books](#)
- [Focus on the Family Plugged In book reviews](#)
- Reviews of books for Christian families at
 - [redeemedreader.com](#)
 - [redeemedreader.com/2021/07/john-klassen-and-proverbs-a-guest-post-from-sarah-hartman/](#)
- [Books recommended by home-schooling families](#)
- Triple Crown Book Awards “Wholesome books for kids”
 - [triplecrownawards.org](#)
 - [christianbook.com](#)
- Donations from parents of Sunday school students
- Thrift stores, public library book sales, and used-book websites such as [WorldofBooks](#)
- [Library and Educational Services LLC](#)