

**Suggested
Christian Education Resources/Activities
For The Calvin Jubilee**

[Provided by the North Alabama Presbytery's Task Force
On the Observance of the 500th Anniversary of
The Birth of John Calvin.]

Older Youth and Adults

- **“John Calvin: His Life and Legacy”, DVD** (\$30 - Witherspoon Press and the Theology Worship and Education ministry of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
- **John Calvin for Armchair Theologians** , book by Christopher Elwood and Ron Hill; Westminster John Knox Press. \$16.95; can often be found on amazon.com for much less.
- **“Opening Doors to Discipleship”** - Course C, “Presbyterian/Reformed Faith” – a free on-line course (To learn more about the course, read the article at www.pcusa.org/ideas/08spring/odtd.htm or go directly to www.openingdoorstodiscipleship.com .
- **The Legacy of John Calvin: Some Actions for the Church in the 21st Century** , book (\$12 to Presbyterian Church (USA), 100 Witherspoon Street, Attn: Deborah Harrison, Louisville, KY 40202-1396)

Children and Youth

- **Children's Mission Yearbook for Prayer & Study 2009** - A 16-page color insert “John Calvin and Education: To Grow in Knowledge and Grace ,” features stories and photos from around the church (\$8.95 Presbyterian Distribution Service, 3904 Produce Road, Ste. 2201, Louisville, KY 40218 or pcusa.org)
- **John Calvin: Glimpses for Kids** worship bulletin (chi.gospelcom.net/kids/glimpsesforkids/gfk032.php)
- **A computer program** from Neil McQueen (PC-USA minister) Sunday Software (www.sundaysoftware.com/luther-calvin)
- **Birthday Party for Calvin**
Introduce John Calvin. Talk about the Calvin Jubilee (anniversary) that our church is celebrating. Make party hats and decorate prepared cupcakes to celebrate the birthday of John Calvin (500 years in 2009). Sing “Happy Birthday” to Calvin.
- **Make your own Calvin mask**
Go to www.pcusa.org/theologyandworship/calvin.htm and download either the 11 x 17 version or the 8 1/2 x 11 version of the Calvin mask and follow the instructions.

- **Teach the class “People of the Lord”**, the official hymn of the Calvin Jubilee. The text and music, produced by Greg Scheer, is available without charge, and with permission to reproduce, at: <http://musicblog.gregscheer.com/2009/02/07/people-of-the-lord/> .
A compact disc of “People of the Lord” is currently in production.

Background for teacher: Greg Scheer of the Christian Reformed Church in North America won the Calvin Jubilee hymn competition, Clifton Kirkpatrick, head of the International Patronage Committee for the Calvin Jubilee, announced in October, 2008.

Scheer is Minister of Worship at the Church of the Servant in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and Music Associate at the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship. His writings include The Art of Worship and contributions to Reformed Worship, The Hymn, Call to Worship and Worship Leader and a chapter in New Songs of Celebration Render.

The announcement came during a meeting of World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) and Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches leaders in Bern. Kirkpatrick was Stated Clerk of the PCUSA at the time, and is also president of WARC.

Kirkpatrick said “People of the Lord” suits the Calvin Jubilee admirably. “The hymn encourages the people of God to hand on the heritage of the faith to the next generation – as Calvin did successfully before us.”

The composer has created “a fascinating link between the early Reformed hymns and the modern world,” Kirkpatrick said. It is now up to the Reformed churches around the world to “to play the hymn in as many worship services, devotions or congregational events as possible during the Calvin year.”

- **An Interview with John Calvin**
Invite someone to dress up as Calvin. Using prepared questions, conduct an interview with John Calvin.

Background for teacher: ideas for using this and the following suggestion, “You Are There,” may be found in the article “John Calvin We Hardly Knew Ye” by Chris Meehan, which appears in The Banner, an on-line magazine of the Christian Reformed Church. The article is available without charge at: http://www.thebanner.org/magazine/article.cfm?article_id=1921 .

- **You Are There**
Invite your pastor or another male from your congregation to dress up as Calvin and do a "You Are There", first person account of the Reformation times.

- **Invite a member of you congregation to read a passage from the Bible in French** (German, Spanish, or any foreign language). Tell the class that you have a special guest to read from the Bible for them. After hearing the scripture, ask, “Wasn't that a wonderful message? Of course, the children won't have understood anything that was read, but you might get some surprising answers.

Tell the children that for many, many years, the Bible was only printed in Latin. Only the priests and some of the very rich people were able to read and understand Latin. One of the results of the Protestant Reformation was the printing of the Bible in different languages.

It is very important that each one of us is able to able to read the Bible for ourselves.

- **Once upon a Time**
Tell the story of John Calvin and the Reformation using stick puppets that the children have made.

Older elementary, middle school, or high school

- **Sentence Relay**
Divide the class into two or more teams. The object of the relay is to write a sentence about John Calvin or the Reformation. The first player on each team runs to the board and writes a word. He then dashes back and hands the chalk to the next player in line.

The second player writes a word either before or after the first one. Each player in turn must add a word to the sentence but must avoid completing it before the last teammate's turn.

The team that finishes first with a complete sentence wins. (Variation - Each player may write a **complete sentence** about John Calvin or the Reformation.)

- **What's in a Name?**

Background for Teachers: As a resource, see article "Calvin the Man" available at: www.pcusa.org/calvinjubilee/man.htm

If you know who will be in your class, you might research the history of their names before class (searchforancestors.com) to share with them.

You will need a picture of each child and poster board, felt, or other material to make a banner or flag for each child.

Begin by writing Jean Cauvin, Jean Cauvin, and John Calvin on the board.

Tell the class that each one of us is identified by our name. Most of us have a first name,

a middle name, and a last name. A last name or family name is also known as a surname.

Surnames were generally taken from one of four sources. (Write these on the board. Give one or two examples, and ask the class if they can think of others.)

1) Patronymic (from the first name of father).

Examples:

Peters - son of Peter (English, German)

Peterson - son of Peter (Swedish)

Petersen - son of Peter (Danish)

O'Reilly - grandson of Reilly (Ireland)

Mc- /Mac- - son of (Scottish)

2) Lives near locality or place.

Examples:

KirkPatrick - Church (kirk) of St. Patrick

Cliff - steep hill

Fairholm - the fair island

Ashley - field surrounded by ash trees

Meadows

Hill

3) Occupation or social status.

Examples:

Cooper - barrel maker

Wagner or Waggoner - wagon maker

Knight - knighthood conferred by the king

Smith - blacksmith

Hunter

Baker

Cook

Miller

4) Nicknames describing person or personality.

Examples:

Reid - red, ruddy complexion or red hair

Stout - Body size

Small - Body size

Armstrong - strong arms

Hardy - healthy

Long ago, important families and clans were identified by symbols. These designs were often embroidered on people's clothes and dyed or painted on banners and flags. They were used in battles and sports competitions to show who was who.

Today, many schools, churches, companies, and other institutions use these small designs, called logos, on rings, stationery, books, products, and so on. Talk about some famous logos.

In Japan, they are still used on banners. They have been used there for centuries and were probably also used in central Europe from about the 12th century.

Banners can be used to tell everyone who you are and what you think is important. Ask each child to write on a sheet of paper two or three things that can tell others about what he/she thinks is important.

Using poster board, felt, or other fabric, let each child make a banner or flag. Put their picture and the things from each list on the banner or flag.

- **Mobile**

Talk about some of the things that John Calvin thought were important. Using the pattern for the John Calvin mask, make a mobile using the face of John Calvin at the top and some of his beliefs.

- **Reformation/John Calvin Card Game**

Preparation

Get a number of 3 x 5” cards. You will need fifty-two of them. Using key beliefs from what has been discussed about Calvin or the Reformation, write down a key word or words for each belief. You will need thirteen of them. Make four cards for each of the thirteen key words so that a deck of fifty-two is in hand.

Playing the Game

Divide into groups of four or six. Give each group a deck of belief cards and teach them to play “Gin Rummy”.

Shuffle the cards, and deal seven cards to each player. Place the rest of the cards in a center pick-and-discard pile. The task is to get matching sets of four cards. The winner is the first to lay down all of his/her cards.

(Variation – For older players – The only way a set of four can be laid down is if the player doing so can tell what that belief means in our denomination.)

- **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

"Calvin the Man" – www.pcusa.org/calvinjubilee/man.htm

"Calvin and Society" – www.pcusa.org/calvinjubilee/society.htm

"Calvin and Reformed Faith" – www.pcusa.org/calvinjubilee/reformed-faith.htm

The Task Force expresses particular appreciation to Elder B.J. Breeding for her work on this resource piece. She is a member of St. Andrew Presbyterian Church, Decatur, Alabama.

