# Table of Contents

All about Museum of the Bible ................................................................. 4  
Welcome! .................................................................................................. 6  
Education Department Goals .................................................................. 7  
Five Principles of Engagement .................................................................. 8  
Global Initiative ......................................................................................... 9  
National Initiative ................................................................................... 12  
Methodology for K–12 Programs ............................................................... 13  
K–12 Academic Outcomes ....................................................................... 14  
Program Approach ................................................................................... 15  
Pre-Program Activities ............................................................................ 16  
Education Programs ................................................................................. 17  
On-Site Activities ..................................................................................... 20  
Education Events ...................................................................................... 20  
Education Events ..................................................................................... 21  
Professional Development ........................................................................ 21  
Museum of the Bible Curriculum ............................................................... 22  
Museum Tours for All Ages ....................................................................... 23  
Public Programs ....................................................................................... 24  
Staff .......................................................................................................... 25  
Thank you! ............................................................................................... 26
All about Museum of the Bible

Museum of the Bible is a global, innovative, educational institution whose purpose is to invite all people to engage with the transformative power of the Bible.

Fodor’s Travel says the museum “breaks the mold of museum exhibiting,” and it’s easy to see why. Enter our 430,000-square-foot building — located just three blocks from the US Capitol in Washington, DC — and you’ll experience interactive galleries, one-of-a-kind attractions, and hundreds of biblical artifacts that convey the global impact and fascinating history of one of the most influential, discussed, and best-selling books of all time.

The Impact of the Bible Floor features the Bible in the World exhibit, which shows the Bible’s global influence on culture, and Bible in America, which explores the Bible’s profound and sometimes complicated impact on American history and culture. Don’t forget to ride Washington Revelations, a multi-sensory tour that “flies” past biblical references on our monuments and buildings.

The Stories of the Bible Floor offers the Themed Entertainment Association award-winning Hebrew Bible Experience, a 30-minute journey through the stories of the Hebrew Bible, as well as a re-creation of a first-century Galilean village and a 270-degree theater depicting the remarkable story of how the followers of Jesus became a thriving community.

The History of the Bible Floor features hundreds of artifacts documenting the Bible’s preservation, translation, and transmission across the centuries. Drive Thru History’s Dave Stotts tells the story in an engaging and entertaining way in mini theaters throughout the floor.

Visit museumoftheBible.org for more information.
BIBLES FOR EVERYONE

Growth in wealth, technology, and learning following the Industrial Revolution resulted in the production and translation of the Bible on a previously unimaginable scale. More people than ever gained access to an increasing diversity of Bibles. But for some groups, the traditional form and language of the Bible have remained virtually unchanged.
Welcome!
Letter from the Director of Education

Museum of the Bible is home to numerous exhibitions and attractions, as well as the Museum Collections. Together, they provide the Education Department an endless supply of resources to develop new and exciting programs.

While the history, stories, and impact of the Bible anchor all our programs, we juxtapose the “Book of books” with our educational goals, methodology, and structure to support educators and learners globally. The organized and deliberate structure of our programs eases learners into the content, encourages active participation before each program, and provides resources to deepen understanding afterward.

Our global and national initiatives showcase our efforts to encourage global citizenship and critical thinking skills among our youth, while our Five Principles of Engagement highlight the criteria we put into practice within each program.

We are here, of all ages and nationalities, to learn together about the Bible and its impact on the world.

Welcome to the Museum of the Bible Education Department!

Sincerely,

Sandra Lima Argo
Director of Education
Museum of the Bible
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Education Department Goals

Museum education is unique.

Expansive exhibits, artifacts, and programs provide rich opportunities for enrichment. Additionally, working with international audiences challenges us to provide enrichment opportunities for all ages and nationalities.

At Museum of the Bible, the Education Department has two goals:

- *Interpret and apply the mission of the museum through immersive and interactive experiences.*
- *Collaborate with our partners to create immersive, interactive, and transformative learning experiences that foster Bible engagement.*

Engagement

The foundation of the programs and initiatives of the Museum of the Bible Education Department is based on the concept of engagement. Here is our definition:

*Engagement is the ability to activate and captivate learners’ mental, physical, and emotional learning centers through programs that immerse students into the history and stories of the Bible, provide historic and present-day examples of its relevance, and motivate lifelong learning.*
Five Principles of Engagement

The Education Department achieves maximum engagement with the Bible by layering five universal principles throughout our programs.

**Relevance:** Programs are tailor-made for specific audiences, targeting their interests and shared experiences. Learners will interact with material that relates to their daily lives while also understanding its broader historical context and global impact.

**Contextual Learning:** Programs support interactive discussions and hands-on activities that develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

**Transformative Understanding:** Programs will expose learners to life experiences, cultural norms, and perspectives different from their own. Interaction with other worldviews will ignite new concepts and understanding to support academic and social development.

**Lifelong Learning:** Programs enhance individual curiosity and motivation to learn. Participants will be encouraged to continue learning and enhancing their knowledge about the subjects they were presented.

**Dialogue:** Programs promote interaction with learners rather than lecture style. There will be a conversation between the educator and the learner, allowing them to participate in their own learning experience.
Global Initiative

Museum of the Bible is a global institution that encompasses many diverse partnerships. Scholars, researchers, and archaeologists contribute to the museum’s robust collection, which proclaims a deep appreciation for art and language from its earliest iterations through today. The museum’s innovative approach transports the history and stories of the Bible outside the museum’s walls and into classrooms and homes worldwide, providing an invitation to engage with the transformative power of the Bible. The museum’s global initiative supports our global audience, whether participating in our education experiences on site or virtually. For that reason, Museum of the Bible’s Education Department considers broad educational goals. These goals are aligned with the following international goals:
PISA
The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), developed by the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD), evaluates students’ ability to apply learned knowledge to real life circumstances.

Museum of the Bible’s Education Department values the impact this assessment has made on education globally. More importantly, we believe in the ability future leaders will have to solve global problems collaboratively when they are equipped with the skills that are evaluated in PISA: problem solving, text interpretation, life application, knowledge, reasoning, and communication and collaboration.

Social & Emotional Learning
Standards for Social & Emotional Learning (SEL) have rapidly increased over the past couple years. Museum of the Bible’s Education Department values the development of these competencies in our youth and uses the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) framework to identify competencies that can be applied to programs to support the following: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making.

American Alliance of Museums
The American Alliance of Museums (AAM) provides a set of core standards for museum education and interpretation. While Museum of the Bible’s Education Department actively pursues all eight standards, three of the eight standards focus on understanding and providing for the needs of our audiences (https://www.aam-us.org):

- The museum understands the characteristics and needs of its existing and potential audiences and uses this understanding to inform its interpretation.
- The museum uses techniques, technologies, and methods appropriate to its educational goals, content, audiences, and resources.
- The museum presents accurate and appropriate content for each of its audiences.
National Initiative

Museum of the Bible’s Education Department works with diverse public schools in metropolitan regions, smaller private schools, youth groups from various faith organizations, and homeschool communities.

Our broad audience has varied academic goals and objectives to support their communities’ desired outcomes. Museum of the Bible has the unique opportunity to offer an endless supply of resources within our numerous exhibitions, collections, and attractions to enhance your community’s learning goals within three primary disciplines:

- English Language Arts (ELA)
- History & Social Sciences (H/SS)
- The Arts

The primary resource for program development at the museum is the Bible, with a focus on the Bible’s history, impact, and stories. The Bible holds the potential to develop learners in many key areas: reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language, as well as in history/social sciences (H/SS) and the arts.

Museum of the Bible K–12 programs consider overarching themes or concepts relating to ELA, H/SS, and the arts, and choose the most applicable content for each age group to carefully weave into programs.

Regardless of the academic disciplines that are incorporated into our Education Department’s programs, we consistently emphasize analysis, inference, and cultural context to deepen understanding and enhance a broader perspective.
Methodology for K–12 Programs

Active learning is a globally practiced methodology shown to increase learned knowledge and understanding when compared to a standard lecture model in the classroom. By focusing on student-centered engagement, learners are able to participate in and guide their own learning. Museum of the Bible’s Education Department offers a unique approach to active learning by promoting activities that also take Gardner’s Theory of Multiple Intelligence into account (Gardner, 2011). This multifaceted approach reinforces learned knowledge, skills, and understanding within our tailor-made programs.

Museum of the Bible’s Education Department intentionally builds fun into learning. Through our primary offerings, learners enjoy engaging in active learning, which increases their retention of the focused content.

- **Virtual and in-person educational programs take a kinesthetic approach to learning. Learners are challenged to collaborate and use critical thinking skills as they navigate museum exhibits and experiences.**

- **Synchronous digital tours provide a personalized and student-led approach to the museum’s exhibitions. Learners’ questions and areas of interest help to direct the tour guide through exhibits in one of three areas: history of the Bible, stories of the Bible, impact of the Bible.**

- **Living history interpreters are actors; a feature unique to our museum. They invite learners into immersive face-to-face interactions with authentic characters who participate in the world of the Bible and historical moments impacted by the Bible.**
K–12 Academic Outcomes

The Museum of the Bible Education Department’s fun and immersive programs are developed based on national and global academic standards. We take time to understand the base knowledge of each group and challenge students by providing content that will:

Increase Learned Knowledge

Deliberate and focused efforts to support vocabulary development, understanding culture within a given context, timelines of historical events, technological advancements, and relevance to life are woven throughout our programs.

Increase Learned Skills

Witnessing and participating in role-play activities with our living history interpreters support the development and practice of empathy. Interactive dialogue and pre-program activities will teach students how to ask effective questions. Learners will be challenged to observe, analyze, infer, communicate, and problem solve to support the development of critical thinking.

Increase Key Understandings

Learners are presented with three overarching understandings to motivate them to continue to engage with the Bible beyond their museum experience: the Bible is an important book for all people, the Bible is an important book for my community, and the Bible is relevant to my life.

We value excellence. In order to enhance the learning experience and to assure each group the most robust program, we consistently provide three “touchpoints” for learning. Aside from the program itself, pre- and post-program resources are provided.

PRE-PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

LIVE PROGRAM

POST-PROGRAM RESOURCES
Program Approach

What primary skill can all learners develop that will help them to succeed academically, interpersonally, and intrapersonally while also aligning with Museum of the Bible’s Education Department methodology and *Five Principles of Engagement* (pages 5–6)?

**The Ability to Ask Effective Questions!**

Museum of the Bible Education Department programs are developed and refined by asking questions. Living history interpreters at the museum develop their characters through the art of questioning. Museum of the Bible’s global partnerships, which include researchers, biblical scholars, and archaeologists, have an acute understanding of question asking; their work is a result of this activity.

The museum’s K–12 program activities will prepare learners to participate in museum programs, school classrooms, and in life by helping them to build a habit of asking effective questions.

**The Challenge with Questions**


Questioning is an outward demonstration of curiosity. Therefore, learner insecurity and fear can serve as a barrier to developing curiosity. If a learner is afraid to ask questions, they will refrain and their curiosity will diminish over time. Alternatively, if learners build a habit of effective question asking, they will feed and grow their curiosity.

**A Museum Is a Place of Curiosity!**
Pre-Program Activities

To prepare participants for our programs, we encourage formulating effective questions and stimulating curiosity.

Providing pre-program activities that support effective questioning will ease learner anxiety and enhance learner engagement with unfamiliar instructors, methods, and materials during Museum of the Bible’s immersive educational programs. In addition, the activities and outcomes will contribute to greater success in the classroom and life.

Pre-program activities will be provided to educators following program registration. The resources can be accessed and downloaded for your students. The following description highlights potential focus for K–12 students.

Elementary, Middle, and High School Focus

Role-play activities will support empathy development as learners put themselves in the position of a journalist, researcher, or living history interpreter. Critical thinking skills will be exercised as learners work together to develop effective questions for one another.

Learners will be challenged to identify different parts of a question, different types of questions, and/or the relationship between questions and answers.

Engaging with Museum of the Bible Education Department pre-program materials will familiarize learners with the content and give young learners opportunities to practice asking questions, thereby increasing learner confidence, engagement, and understanding during the live program.
**Education Programs**

**Life in First-Century Nazareth**
Experience the village of Nazareth during the time of Jesus. Meet the villagers and learn about their economy, culture, daily life, and religious practices. This program includes a tour of the World of Jesus of Nazareth exhibit with our living history interpreters. Students are invited to participate in real time with Q&A as they interact with the villagers.

**Revolutionary Words: The Gutenberg Press**
During this interactive presentation about the Gutenberg press, learners will experience an unusual interruption by a special guest. This is a contextual learning opportunity to compare the reproduction of reading materials in the fifteenth century to today.

**Ancient Art of the Torah Scribe**
Learners will interact with a rabbi and explore the ancient art of writing a Hebrew Torah scroll with a master scribe. There will be an opportunity to examine artifacts and materials related to scribal traditions. The learner will be able to practice Hebrew calligraphy.
Archaeology and the Bible
Explore the work of archaeologists who have uncovered remnants of ancient Israel. Discover what archaeology reveals about Jewish culture and neighboring cities during biblical times and its contribution to understanding that period. This program ends with a review of the artifacts in the exhibit, *The People of the Land: History and Archaeology of Ancient Israel*, our long-term gallery from the Israel Antiquities Authority.

If I Had a Hammer
A hammer is not the only tool Martin Luther used to spark the Protestant Reformation! Learners will choose two “tools” out of six to assess their influence on the Protestant Reformation. Following this assessment, they will consider how the absence of any of Luther’s “tools” could have redirected the outcome.

Material Culture and the Hebrew Bible
Learners are given tools to engage with material culture from the biblical period to better understand the biblical text. By juxtaposing artifacts from the exhibit *The People of the Land: History and Archaeology of Ancient Israel* and challenging biblical verses, we are able to show students how archaeological remains allow us to better understand the text.

Religious Freedom and the Founding of America
Examine the story of religious freedom in America, from colonial settlement through the passing of the US Constitution. Explore topics related to religious tolerance and pluralism to understand the origins of religious freedom in the United States. Small group activities encourage contextual understanding of the events at the founding of the nation.
On-Site Activities

Education Station
The Education Station, found in the atrium on Floor 4, provides an opportunity for tactile-kinesthetic learning. A variety of activities reinforce what learners have experienced or will experience throughout the museum. Activities include, but are not limited to, creating: stained glass windows, illuminations, and bookmarks with their name in Hebrew using a phonetic Hebrew alphabet.

Scavenger Hunts
Guests can explore the museum in a fun and interactive way. They will find answers to questions as they navigate the museum. Stop at the Museum Shop with your completed hunt for a small gift!

Education Events
Scribe Week
Join Museum of the Bible for a week of activities, crafts, demonstrations, dramatic presentations, and immersive tours that all revolve around the focus of the scribal art, both past and present. Learn about how the Bible has been preserved and transmitted throughout time by taking part in hands-on activities and interacting with scribes from ancient Mesopotamia to Renaissance Germany, portrayed by living history interpreters. Featured during this week are programs related to our working replica Gutenberg printing press.
Education Events

Sleepovers @ Museum of the Bible
Spend a private evening in the museum with your school or church group. Programming is personally designed for each group and may include interactions with living history interpreters, private tours through the exhibit galleries, hands-on activities, and more. Special moments are created through this overnight stay in the museum.

Homeschool Day
A special day at the museum just for homeschool families. Activities are tailor-made for homeschool groups and their unique interests. Past activities have included interacting with living history interpreters in a variety of roles, participation in role-play activities, hands-on crafts, special hands-on workshops, curator talks and tours, and special tours of the museum.

Professional Development

Learn with Our Curators and Specialists
Educators will be introduced to programs at the museum that can be incorporated into their curricula. They will have the opportunity to experience how to intertwine curriculum with the museum experience. Using our framework for program development, educators will be encouraged to create museum activities.
Museum of the Bible Curriculum

Student Textbook (4 Volumes) and Accompanying Teacher’s Guide

Museum of the Bible Curriculum provides an innovative way to engage students with the Bible. The descriptive approach in the four-volume set encompasses major narratives from Genesis to Revelation. Lessons on the history of the Bible help students comprehend its fascinating past. Impact lessons introduce the Bible’s considerable influence over the centuries. Using unique interactive technology, engaged students move beyond the page for a more meaningful learning experience.

Visit museumoftheBible.org/curriculum to learn more.
Museum Tours for All Ages

Museum of the Bible provides docent-led tours that explore the ways the Bible has impacted our history and culture. Our tours take visitors on a journey through our galleries and artifacts, the World of Jesus of Nazareth, and other museum spaces.

Museum of the Bible Highlights
This tour will introduce you to the permanent galleries and their rich collection of artifacts, attractions, and highlights to better guide your experience at Museum of the Bible. This tour is offered daily.

Explores Most Floors

The Bible in American History
Learn about the Bible’s presence throughout American history and how it has guided debate, impacted pivotal events, and influenced the views of prominent historical figures. Discover how Americans have turned to the Bible to justify or support their beliefs.

Explores Floor 2

The World of Jesus of Nazareth
Step into the village of Nazareth during the first century AD. Meet the villagers and learn about their economy, culture, daily life, and religious practices.

Explores Floor 3

Public Programs

Educational programs create accessible, intriguing, and participatory learning experiences about the history, narratives, and impact of the Bible through public, K–12, and family programs that enable individuals to awaken or extend their interest in the Bible and communities to develop synergistic dialogue and initiatives around the significance of the Bible.

Public Programs focus on museum programming for adults. These have historically been more academic and are geared toward a general audience familiar with the Bible. Our “Speaker Series” features outside speakers giving lectures or participating in panel discussions on a wide variety of contemporary topics. We also host short lectures and tours by our curators or outside speakers.

Public Programs

Our programs offer a variety of opportunities for the public to engage with the Bible. Below is a sampling of programs provided:

Current Programs:

- **Major Programs** — Twice a month, we host a large event featuring prominent speakers and scholars. The topics relate to our permanent and special exhibits, and include programs such as book launches, film screenings, and our “Speaker Series.”

- **Lunch and Learn** — Our latest program, held the last Wednesday of every month, features museum staff and guest speakers discussing a variety of topics.

- **Podcast** — Tune in using your favorite platform and listen to museum staff, guest speakers, and scholars as they discuss a variety of topics relating to the history and impact of the Bible.

- **Online Engagement** — Learn captivating and fun tidbits by watching the museum’s curators as they reveal their favorite facts, what fascinates them, and the stories behind our many artifacts.

Check back often to see how we continue to broaden our scope of educational programs for all ages.
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We also offer internships and volunteer opportunities for anyone who is interested in having experiences in museum education.
Thank you!
Letter from the Chief Curatorial Officer

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about what Museum of the Bible has to offer. We are excited about our growing number of opportunities and resources for teachers and students that focus on the Bible. Our programs are accessible to those who visit our museum in Washington, DC, and virtually to classrooms around the world. We are grateful for the wonderful response and hope we can be a resource for you.

We invite you to further your engagement with Museum of the Bible through our in-person school programs, tours, and virtual classrooms. Additionally, we offer numerous free digital resources on our website.

The energy found within the exhibitions and attractions at Museum of the Bible is unmatched. Please visit us to deepen your understanding and knowledge about the history, stories, and impact of the Bible.

Our innovative, global, and educational institution is eager to serve you and your students.

Sincerely,
Jeffrey Kloha, PhD
Chief Curatorial Officer
Museum of the Bible
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