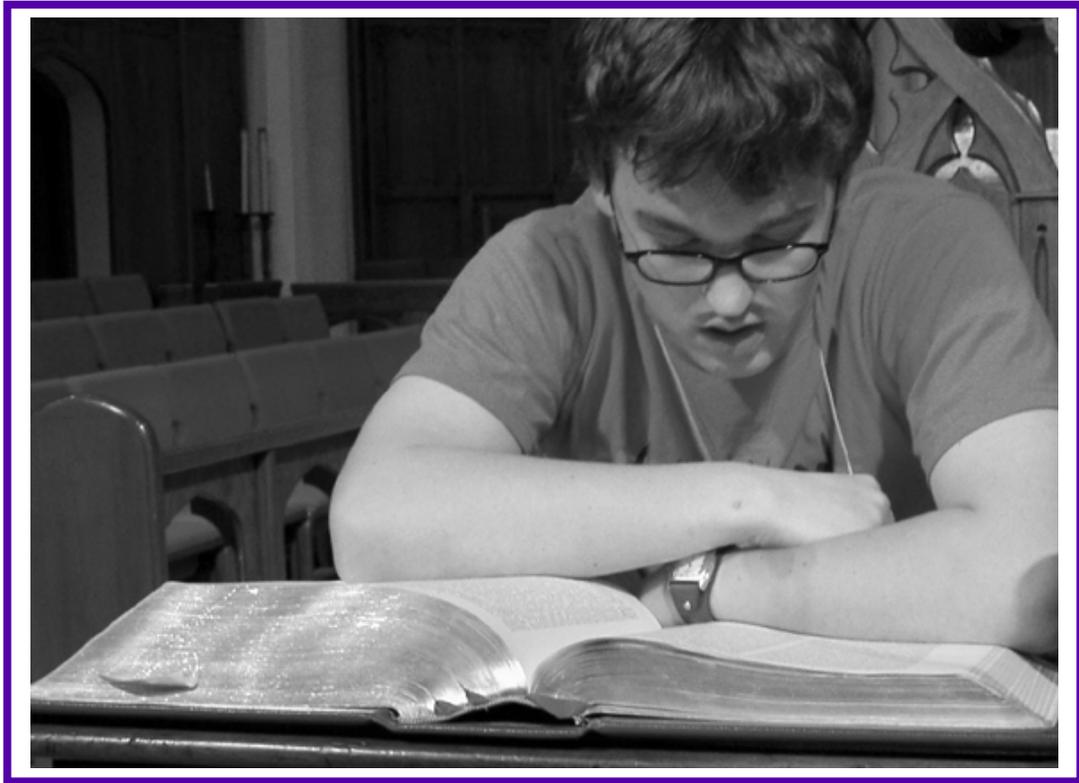


MIQRA



“A Public Reading of Scripture”

A How-To Guide for Hosting a Miqra Event

Created by the Episcopal Diocese of Kansas



Published by LeaderResources

What the heck is “Miqra?”

The word “Miqra” is a Hebrew word that means “a public reading of scripture” and this Miqra weekend is an event where youth gather to learn, read and fall in love with Scripture.

Over the course of the weekend, young people participate in a marathon reading of the entire Bible. They sign up for hour-long shifts to read aloud and while the reading is taking place, other youth are in fun classes to learn more about Scripture and how it can impact their lives. We teach that the Bible is a love story between God and God’s people.

History and Vision of Miqra

The Miqra weekend was originally created almost a decade ago by the Rev. Kelly Demo in her work with the young people of the Episcopal Diocese of Kansas. Originally, Kelly thought this would be a one-time event for the diocese, but the youth were so energetic about this program that it is now an annual weekend event that has grown so large it now is separated into two separate events: one for Junior High & one for Senior High.

Kelly says, “I find youth to be hungry for knowledge about scripture and Miqra feeds that hunger. What a joy it was at the first Miqra event to hear kids sitting around discussing and laughing about the laws of Leviticus they had read. I overheard one girl asking her friend how The Book of Ruth turned out because her time to read had been over before she finished the book. She was dying to know how it ended!”

Today the Miqra program continues under the leadership of Chad Senuta, who is the current Youth Missioner for the Diocese of Kansas. It has also been used in various dioceses around the country including Arkansas and Chicago.

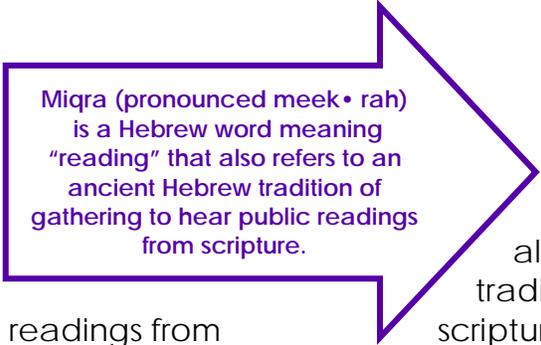
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I. Introduction

It is a standing joke that Episcopalians have no idea what is in the Bible. However, all too often it is not a joke. People come to the Bible with feelings of intimidation, fear, confusion, and guilt. God's message of salvation gets lost in a sea of misunderstanding and even anger. How tragic! These powerful ancient texts can give one hope and healing and insight into the mind of God! What a precious gift!

The Miqra Program aims to give youth an entry point into scripture. By reading the Bible in its entirety we emphasize the importance of seeing scripture as a whole. That is, seeing the big picture of God's saving works in history. Even though youth will not sit to hear the entire 72 hours of reading, they will come to understand the full story, from beginning to end. We also hope they will find little gems in scripture that they will be puzzled, challenged, or inspired by.



Miqra (pronounced meek•rah) is a Hebrew word meaning "reading" that also refers to an ancient Hebrew tradition of gathering to hear public readings from scripture.

What is "Miqra"?

Miqra (pronounced meek•rah) is a Hebrew word meaning "reading" that also refers to the ancient Hebrew tradition of gathering to hear public readings from scripture. It is found in Nehemiah 8:8 where Israel's leaders have gathered the people. "They read from the Book of the Law of God, making it clear and giving meaning so that the people could understand what was being read." And this is the primary goal of the Miqra program. To make Holy Scriptures accessible so that youth can understand what is being read.

Miqra was first done in the Diocese of Kansas in January of 2002. The following pages explain how we do the event and include everything one would need to host a Miqra event at their parish or diocese. However, know that this is more of a framework than a curriculum. Much of the content of what is taught depends on your local resources (clergy and teachers), interests and needs.

(MORE INFO INCLUDED IN FULL VERSION OF MIQRA – This is a sample only and intended only for review purposes!!)**

Suggestions for Reading

Things to Remember as a Reader

1. This is not a performance! Try not to worry about: people hearing you, pronunciations, or how fast you read. This is meant to be more of a conversation between the reader and God.
2. When you finish one book of the Bible, move on to the next. Say the name of the book and start with chapter one.
3. Don't stop reading until the next reader or group arrives.
4. When the next person comes up to read, finish the chapter, point out where you left off, and let them continue.
5. Youth are responsible to wake themselves up for late night slots. Alarm clocks will be provided and 2 adult sponsors will be in the reading room throughout the night.
6. Unless otherwise directed the only time readers are to be in the reading room is during their scheduled reading time. Remain with the other participants, or in your sleeping area, until a few minutes before the scheduled reading time. And then return immediately at the end of the reading time slot. Please be careful not to disturb other participants coming or going.

Things to remember for signup

1. Sign up for one slot now, then once everyone's had a chance to sign up, you can sign up for additional time slots later.
2. Reading is voluntary. You don't have to if you don't want to.
3. The maximum number of people that can sign up per hour time slot is three.

III. The Program

“So, do kids really come to an event where you just read the Bible all weekend long?” Of course, the answer to that would be no! In fact, you’d be hard-pressed to find a group of people of ANY age who would come listen to the Bible read for 72 hours straight, so a Miqra weekend offer MUCH more!

Bible 101: What is the Bible & Why Should We Read it?

In the first program time, we acknowledge that all participants come to Miqra with different understandings, experience, and knowledge of the Bible. In an attempt to get everyone on the same page, we invite clergy and student speakers to present on 2 basic questions: what is in the bible, and why should we read it? These topics guide our program for the first day of the event.

You may want to explain different types of literature found in the Bible or how books are grouped. (If your church uses a children’s Sunday School program like Godly Play or Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, you may want to borrow their wooden bookshelf that shows the different books of the Bible.) It is also advisable to give a historical timeline of books and events of the Bible which help us see the big picture or story arc of God and God’s people.

Bible 102: How Should We Read the Bible?

The next section of the program deals with the question: how should we read the Bible? We invite clergy and lay leaders to present on topics such as historical context, biblical exegesis (critical explanation or interpretation) and how to make the Bible an integral part of our daily lives. We do not teach a strictly literal reading of Scripture, but rather offer a broader, more holistic reading of God’s word.

Biblical “Electives” in the form of Workshops

Since we know that each participant comes with different knowledge and interests we offer workshop times each day where participants can choose classes that would interest them. We make sure to offer a variety of classes and activities for those who had very little or no knowledge of the Bible and those who might want a more academic approach.

(MORE INFO INCLUDED IN FULL VERSION OF MIQRA – This is a sample only and intended only for review purposes!)**

V. Sample Schedule

FRIDAY

6:30 pm	Dinner
7:30 pm	Training: How can we be Welcoming?
8:30 pm	Movie & Preparations: <u>Say Anything</u>
10:30 pm	Youth led Compline
11:30 pm	Lights out

SATURDAY

8:30	Breakfast
9:00	Youth led Morning Prayer
10:00	Preparations for arrival
11:30	Lunch
12:30 PM	Registration: unpack, games
1:30	Large Group Gathering
3:00	Tribe Time: Introductions & beginning thoughts on bible
3:30	Break and Snacks
3:45	BIBLE 101: "What's in the Bible & why should we read it?"
4:30	Tribe Time to discuss Bible 101 presentation
5:00	Workshops <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Early Church History• Learning about the Apocrypha• Arts and crafts: Make Your Own Bible Cover• How to Become a Contagious Christian• Family, Faith, and the Bible• Star Wars and Bible
6:15	Dinner

(* FULL SCHEDULE INCLUDED IN FULL VERSION OF MIQRA – This is a sample only and intended only for review purposes!!)**

V. Worship

Worship is a very important part of the Miqra experience, and we often find that youth participants leave wanting more. Each year it seems we're trying to build in more time for worship.

What kinds of worship experiences are offered?

We spend a lot of time singing at Miqra. We have a youth worship band in our diocese called The Mustard Seeds, which plays contemporary praise and worship music, but you can use whatever songs you like.

Each night we have a youth led compline. We will often sing Taizé songs in conjunction with this.

On Sunday morning all the participants attend service at the Cathedral. We involve youth from the event into as many parts of the liturgy as we can. Youth participants do the readings, and we also have 2-3 youth give the sermon. The youth preachers are selected long before the event and are given instructions on how to prepare the sermon from the Diocesan Youth Coordinator and the Dean of the Cathedral. The preachers include a description of the event and how the experience has impacted them in their sermon.

VII. Suggested Rules/Guidelines for Event

Each church or diocese may have their own set of rules or guidelines, so it is fine to modify this list to meet your needs, but we include it here as a reminder to be clear about your expectations. Spending some of your preparation time thinking about and discussing these issues so that everyone is on the same page will help ensure the best possible experience for all participants and leaders.

Our Community Standards

1. Our event is intended to be primarily a public reading of scripture with the intent of helping participant discover God's love through reading and understanding the Bible.
2. We provide a safe, healthy environment for this event which includes adequate adult supervision, nutritious meals and an enforced "lights out" policy to give opportunity for 8 hours of sleep.
3. We seek to be a unified community for this event and we expect all participants to abide by the following rules:
 - Respect yourself, others, and property through your actions and words
 - Respect and follow the rules for the event.
 - Be an active participant in scheduled activities
 - Sleeping areas are off limits to members of the opposite sex at all times.
 - Do not bring offensive music or clothing.
 - No sexual activity.
 - Prescription drugs are to be handed over to the appropriate person at the beginning of the event.
 - No alcohol, illegal drugs, tobacco products, fireworks, or weapons are allowed at anytime.
 - Youth are not allowed to drive their cars during the event and are not allowed to go to their cars without permission from the event coordinator.

VIII. Other Miscellaneous Details

What does it cost to hold a Miqra Event?

The Episcopal Diocese of Kansas charges participants a \$50 registration fee, which covers most of the costs for the program. There is also \$500 in the diocesan budget for program and administration costs for the event.

Intended Age of Participants

Our event is for students in grades 7-12. The event could easily be done for college-aged students and would also be appropriate for Jr. High or High School youth separately. It has also been done for adult events.

Contact Information

If you have other questions not addressed in this packet, please do not hesitate to contact us. We would also appreciate your feedback if you host a Miqra event. Please let us know how it goes.

MIQRA REGISTRATION FORM

Full name (Please print) _____

Nickname _____

Gender: M F (circle one) Birthdate _____ Age _____ Grade _____

Address _____

City _____ ST _____ Zip _____

Parish _____

E-mail address _____

Father/Guardian _____ Day Phone (____) _____

Eve. Phone (____) _____

Cell Phone (____) _____

Mother/Guardian _____ Day Phone (____) _____

Eve. Phone (____) _____

Cell Phone (____) _____

Alternate (in case parent/guardian cannot be reached) _____

Relationship _____ Phone (____) _____

Please return forms and registration fee by the deadline of _____

Make checks payable to: _____ (Please put "MIQRA" in memo line.)

T-Shirt Size (*all sizes are adult sizes*) - circle one: S M L XL XXL

What to bring: Toiletries Sleeping Bag, sleeping pad or air mattress
 Towel Musical instruments if you wish to play
 Pillow Bible, & Journal – if you have one

Mail registration and payment to:

<< insert address & other contact info >>

MIQRA PROMOTIONAL FLYER



What is MIQRA?

"MIQRA" (meek-rah) is a Hebrew word that means "a public reading of scripture," and that's what the event is all about! We read the entire bible from Genesis to Revelation in 72 hours by reading in shifts and while doing other fun activities.

What else do we do besides read the bible all weekend?

While the public reading is taking place, the majority of participants are enjoying an exciting program that includes: hearing dynamic speakers teach about the bible, praying, making new friends, playing games, worshipping with the youth band, and increasing their knowledge of God's Word.

Why have an event like MIQRA?

The Bible is a really important book, but many people -- including Christians:

- a) Don't know what is in the bible, much less how it relates to their life
- b) Consider the bible boring
- c) Feel guilty that they don't read the Bible more

This is a chance for youth from around the diocese to come together to learn more about the Bible, which is God's love letter to the world.

Who should come to MIQRA?

The event is for students in grades 7-12 of the 2005-06 school year.

Where is the event held?

Grace Cathedral in Topeka (701 SW 8th Ave. • Topeka, KS 66603)

When?

Jan 14-16th. Registration will begin at 12:30 pm on the 14th, and we'll finish about 10:30 am on the 16th.

How do I register for the event?

Registrations are available at your parish or online at www.episcopal-ks.org/youth

What is the cost for the event? \$50

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