

## TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

### TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

**Don't Stop**  
Wise Men  
Matthew 2:1-12

### TODAY'S KEY QUESTION

How can you celebrate  
Jesus all year long?

### TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Never stop celebrating Jesus.

### MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

"[Mary] is going to have a son.  
You must give him the name Jesus.  
That's because he will save his  
people from their sins."  
Matthew 1:21, NIV

### MONTHLY VIRTUE

Christmas—Celebrating Jesus,  
God's greatest gift

### BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

### PRELUDE: Setting the Tone for the Experience

See the **Getting Ready** pages at the end of this document for a detailed description of what you'll need for today.

In the **Prelude** folder of your curriculum, you'll find a variety of other resources to help you prepare.

Check out our Pinterest page here <https://bit.ly/447HSzi> for a visual on some of the activities.

Check out our Small Group Leader Conversation Guides to guide you through salvation conversations: <https://bit.ly/4daxSUg>

### SMALL GROUP

**15**  
MIN

#### SOCIAL: Providing Time for Fun Interaction

Just for Fun  
Opening Activity

### LARGE GROUP

**35**  
MIN

#### STORY: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways

#### WORSHIP: Inviting People to Respond to God

Welcome/Opener  
Worship  
Bible Story (Communicator Script)  
Key Question  
Prayer

### SMALL GROUP

**25**  
MIN

#### GROUPS: Creating a safe place to connect

Application Activity: Take a Snapshot  
Bible Story Review: Bible Story Extension and Discussion Questions  
Memory Verse Activity: Verses to Take with You  
Prayer Activity: Make it Personal with Prayer

### HOME: Prompting Action Beyond the Experience

Parent Cue Card (Print or Email)  
Devotionals for Kids  
Parent Cue App

**PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION  
15 MINUTES**

**MADE TO CONNECT**

an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding



*Before the kids arrive, pray that you will have so much fun with your students hearing about their Christmas, looking ahead to New Year's, and talking about how to keep Christmas going all year long.*

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**MONTHLY VIRTUE**

**Christmas—Celebrating Jesus, God's greatest gift**

**BASIC TRUTH**

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**1. JUST FOR FUN**

**WHAT YOU NEED:** Offering container, gift bag, and gift bows

**WHAT YOU DO:**

- Welcome kids to your group by name.
- Lead kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
- Place the gift bows into a gift bag.
- Invite a kid to reach into the gift bag of bows and remove one without looking into the bag.
- Based on the color bow they remove, ask the kid to share the following.
  - White: Something great that happened recently.
  - Red: Something that did not go the way they wanted recently.
  - Green: Something that happened recently that they wish could happen again.
  - Blue: Favorite thing about Christmas this year or in years past.
- Instruct that kid to place the bow back in the bag.
- Mix the bows up again and let another kid take a turn reaching into the bag and removing a bow.
- Continue until each kid has a turn!

*Note: Modify bow colors based on what you have available and adjust questions as needed.*

PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION  
15 MINUTES

**MADE TO PLAY**

an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group



**2. OPENING ACTIVITY**

**WHAT YOU NEED:** Craft sticks, and cotton balls, *Optional: marbles or ping-pong balls*

**WHAT YOU DO:**

- Invite kids to help you create two identical “race tracks” using craft sticks as the boundaries of the course.
  - Each track should have 40 craft sticks with a start and finish line.
  - Create a few zig-zags along the course to make it more challenging.
  - Be sure the two courses have enough space in between them.
- Choose two kids to start.
- Give the kids a cotton ball (or marble or ping pong ball) and have them place it at the starting point of each track.
- Explain that the goal is to blow the ball through the track from start to finish.
- If the ball goes outside their track’s boundaries, prompt that kid to return to the start and try again.
- On your signal, prompt each kid to blow on the ball to move it through their team’s tracks.
- The first kid to get their cotton ball to the finish line of their track wins.
- Celebrate the kids and call on the next two kids to have a turn.
- Continue as time and interest allow.

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**WHAT YOU SAY:**

“Awesome job making it through that course with its twists and turns! Have you ever hiked a path that’s full of twists and turns? *(Invite responses.)* **[Transition]** In today’s Bible story we’ll meet some travelers who went on a quest that took them far from home. Let’s find out where they were headed and why.”

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT  
25 MINUTES

**MADE TO CONNECT**

an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding



**1. TAKE A SNAPSHOT**

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

**WHAT YOU NEED:** Paper, red markers, and green markers

**WHAT YOU DO:**

- Invite kids to choose a partner. Help guide them as needed.
- Explain kids will play a game of tic-tac-toe.
- Give each pair a sheet of paper, a red marker for "X," and green for "O."
- Ask the pairs to determine who will be X's and who will be O's, then let them begin.
- As kids take turns, tell them to pause after each turn and name one way we can celebrate Jesus all year long.
- The winner is the kid who gets three in a row of their kind.
- After one round, ask the pairs to turn their papers over and make a list of things that could hinder us from celebrating Jesus all year long.
  - Think about attitudes, habits, choices, or anything that might keep us from celebrating Jesus.
- Gather the whole group together and encourage kids to share what they came up with.
- Remind the kids that we don't have to wait for Christmas each year to celebrate the gift of Jesus. We can celebrate Jesus every day by living like He lived.
- **[Make It Personal] Share with the kids something you plan to do this year to help you celebrate Jesus all year long.**
- Challenge kids to choose one of the ideas shared during discussion time to help them continue celebrating Jesus all year long.

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CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT  
25 MINUTES

**MADE TO IMAGINE**  
an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play and reenactment

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**2. BIBLE STORY EXTENSION**  
[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]  
WHAT YOU NEED: Bible

**WHAT YOU DO:**

- Divide the group into two teams.
- Ask the teams to stand in a line facing each other as far apart as possible in your group space.
- Explain the rules of the game below.
  - You'll read a tongue twister that relates to the Bible Story (see below).
  - The first two kids from each team's line will walk toward each other while maintaining eye contact, trying their best not to laugh.
  - When they meet in the middle, instruct the kids to stop and repeat the tongue twister five times as fast as they can, then return to their spot in line.
  - The goal is to maintain a serious face, without laughing, until they are back in line.
  - If a kid laughs before making it back to their line, prompt them to join the other team.
  - Play until all the tongue twisters have been said, or all the kids are on one team.
- Bring everyone together.
- Repeat each of the tongue twisters, and ask kids to share what they think they have to do with today's Bible Story.
- Refer to Matthew 2:1-12 to clarify any answers.
- Use the following tongue twister ideas and discussion questions or add others:
  1. Horrible Herod (*What part did Herod play in the events of today's story?*)
  2. Far Star Search (*What did a star have to do with today's story?*)
  3. Old Gold Gift (*In addition to gold, what other gifts did the wise men bring Jesus?*)
  4. Which Wise Man Was Wisest (*In what ways did the Wise Men show wisdom?*)
  5. Some Awesome Sauce (*What do you think was the most amazing part of today's Bible Story?*)
  6. Are We There Yet? (*Who does this remind you of? Why?*)
  7. Prophets Professed Precisely (*What prophesy from hundreds of years earlier did the wise men know about?*)
  8. Camel Caravan (*How did the wise men know where to travel in search of the King?*)
  9. Crazy King (*Why was Herod upset by the wise men's visit?*)
  10. Epic Escape (*How did God protect the wise men from Herod?*)
- Point out that, for the wise men, celebrating Jesus meant a road trip, sharing their treasures, and worshiping the Messiah—even though it was some time after His birth.



## **(2. BIBLE STORY EXTENSION, CONTINUED)**

- Ask:
  - What does it look like for you to celebrate Jesus—not only in December—but in July or May and all year long in your regular, everyday lives?
  - One of the best ways to celebrate Jesus anytime, anywhere is to live like He lived. What are some ways you can show your love to God and love to others in the things you say and do?



# CHRISTMAS PLAYLIST



LET HEAVEN AND NATURE SING



WEEK  
**FIVE**  
DECEMBER 2024

SMALL GROUP  
**PRETEEN**

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT  
25 MINUTES

## MADE TO CONNECT

an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding



## 3. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

WHAT YOU NEED: No supplies needed

WHAT YOU DO:

Ask:

- How can you celebrate Jesus all year long?
- Why should we celebrate Jesus all year long?
- What do you love most about Christmas?
- How is loving others in regular, everyday ways an ongoing celebration of Jesus?

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CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT  
25 MINUTES

### MADE TO REFLECT

an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application



### 4. VERSES TO TAKE WITH YOU [HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

**WHAT YOU NEED:** Bibles, "Discussion Symbols" Activity Page, coins

**WHAT YOU DO:**

- Gather the kids in a circle.
- Provide Bibles or let kids use a Bible App to look up 2 Corinthians 9:15. Use the Bible Navigation tips below:

***Finding verses with 4th-5th graders:** Ask kids to tell you if the book of the Bible they're looking for is in the Old Testament or New Testament. If it's in the Old, instruct kids to flip slowly, starting at the front of the Bible and heading toward the back, until they find the book they're looking for. If it's in the New, instruct kids to start flipping from the back, going forward to find the book they're looking for. Once they find the book, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. First, have them find the chapter they're looking for. Then explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Tell kids to find the verse within the chapter they've already found.*

- Ask a kid who would like to read the verse aloud to the group.
- Place five of the "Discussion Symbols" Activity Page cards face down in one pile and five in another.
- Place a coin on top of each pile.
  - Be sure one coin has "heads" facing up and the other has "tails" facing up.
- Explain that kids will take turns flipping the third coin, taking a card from one of the piles based on whether the coin lands on heads or tails.
- Instruct kids to read and respond to what's on their card.
- Encourage each kid to share their thoughts, ideas, or questions in response to the card they drew while thinking about 2 Corinthians 9:15.
- After each turn, return the card to the bottom of the pile and invite another kid to take a turn.

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**PRETEEN**

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CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT  
25 MINUTES

## MADE TO REFLECT

an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application



## 5. MAKE IT PERSONAL WITH PRAYER [PRAY TO GOD | PRAYER ACTIVITY]

**WHAT YOU NEED:** No supplies needed

### WHAT YOU DO:

- Gather the group together in a circle.
- Remind kids that the wise men brought gifts to Jesus that were rare, expensive, and worthy of being received by a king.
- One of the gifts we can give to Jesus is our thank You—celebrating Him not only at Christmas but all through the year.
- Repeat 2 Corinthians 9:15 together.
- Ask a few kids if they would like to lead a prayer of thanks to God for sending us Jesus.
- Close the group with prayer.

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## GETTING READY

HERE'S EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW TO GET READY FOR THIS WEEK

### SOCIAL: PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION (15 MINUTES)

Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Get ready to experience today's story.

**(Choose one or both of these activities.)**

#### 1. JUST FOR FUN

*Made to Connect:* an activity that invites kids to share and collaborate with others while growing their understanding

**WHAT YOU NEED:**

- Offering container
- Gift bag, one for each Small Group
- Gift bows in four colors (white, red, green, blue), one of each color for each Small Group
  - *NOTE: Modify bow colors based on what you have available*

#### 2. OPENING ACTIVITY

*Made to Play:* an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and/or working as a group

**WHAT YOU NEED:**

- Craft sticks, eighty for each Small Group
- Cotton ball, one for each kid
- *Optional: you can substitute the cotton balls for marbles or ping-pong balls*

### GROUPS: CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT (25 MINUTES)

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible story applies to real life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

**(Choose as many of these activities as you like.)**

#### 1. TAKE A SNAPSHOT

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

*Made to Connect:* an activity that invites kids to share and collaborate with others while growing their understanding

**WHAT YOU NEED:**

- Paper, one piece for every two kids
- Red markers, one for every two kids
- Green markers, one for every two kids

#### 2. BIBLE STORY EXTENSION

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

*Made to Imagine:* an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play and reenactment

**WHAT YOU NEED:**

- Bible, one for each Small Group

#### 3. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

*Made to Connect:* an activity that invites kids to share and collaborate with others while growing their understanding

**WHAT YOU NEED:**

- No supplies needed

#### 4. VERSES TO TAKE WITH YOU

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

*Made to Reflect:* an activity that creates space for personal processing and application

**WHAT YOU NEED:**

- Bibles, one for each Small Group
- Print the "Discussion Symbols" Activity Page on cardstock and cut apart, one set for each Small Group
- Coins, three for each Small Group

#### 5. MAKE IT PERSONAL WITH PRAYER

[PRAY TO GOD | PRAYER ACTIVITY]

*Made to Reflect:* an activity that creates space for personal processing and application

**WHAT YOU NEED:**

- No supplies needed

### HOME: PROMPTING ACTION BEYOND THE EXPERIENCE

- Print on cardstock or email this week's devotionals and Parent Cue cards.
- Tell parents about our additional family resource: **Parent Cue app**.