

TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

The Word
In the Beginning
Was the Word
John 1:1-5, 14

TODAY'S KEY QUESTION

Why is Jesus important to you?

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

God always had a plan to send 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 kids arrive, take a few minutes to pray in silence and prepare to lead your kids through this month in which they're sure to have a lot of energy! Pray for patience and wisdom to know how to lead them effectively.

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1. JUST FOR FUN

WHAT YOU NEED: Offering container, copy paper or tissue paper

WHAT YOU DO:

- Welcome each kid to your group by name.
- Invite those who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
- When enough kids arrive, give them each two to three half sheets of paper.
- Instruct the kids to hold their sheet of paper behind their backs and try to tear it into the shape of one of the following Christmas holiday-related things:
 - Snowman
 - Gingerbread Cookie
 - Christmas Tree
- Invite the kids to find a partner and show one another their finished work.
- Give them a moment to guess what the other person created.
- If time and interest allow, challenge kids to tear their papers into the image of something that reminds them of Christmas without saying what it is.
 - Provide more paper, as needed.
- Then, invite the kids to show one another their finished work.
- Give them a moment to guess what the other person created.

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: Gift bows

WHAT YOU DO:

- Ask kids to sit in a circle with their hands on the floor.
- Place 10 gift bows in a random pattern in the middle of the circle on the floor.
- Let the kids know that the game you are going to play has a secret rule!
- Start the game off by saying this prompt:
 - "I'm having a Christmas party, and I invited some friends! Can you guess how many friends are coming?"
 - *NOTE: The secret to this game is the number of outstretched fingers you are showing. As you explain the game, don't reveal this secret! Kids will naturally think that the number or color of bows represents the number of friends you have invited to the party. Keep your hands visible but don't make the number of fingers you're holding out too obvious.*
- Let the kids take turns sharing their guesses about how many guests are coming.
- Once everyone has shared their guess, congratulate any kids who guessed correctly.
- Rearrange the bows and repeat with a different number of outstretched fingers, letting the kids take turns sharing their guesses again.
- Encourage kids who think they know the secret to keep making correct guesses until everyone catches on or time runs out.
- As you finish, share the game's secret with the entire group.

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WHAT YOU SAY:

"That was fun! Before we began this game, I had a plan. Did anyone guess the rule correctly? (*Invite responses.*) You had some great guesses. Figuring out the rule took some concentration and a little help. That's when things began to make sense! **[Transition] In today's Bible story, we're going to hear about a plan that didn't seem to make sense but turned out to be the BEST plan EVER. Let's go find out more.**"

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO CREATE

an activity that explores spiritual ideas through the process of drawing, building, and designing



1. TAKE A SNAPSHOT [LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Ornament" Activity Page, pens, garland

WHAT YOU DO:

- Give each kid a pen and one ornament cutout from the "Ornament" Activity Page. **[Make it Personal] Make ornaments along with the kids and share in the discussion.**
- Invite the kids to write something they love about Christmas on their ornament.
- While the kids write, use the garland to create a large triangular shape that resembles a Christmas tree in your group space.
- When kids are finished writing, ask them to place their ornament inside the garland as if they were "hanging" them on a tree.
- Give each kid another ornament cutout and repeat the steps above, but this time, ask them to write something that Christmas shows us about God!
- Once everyone is finished, have each kid add their ornament to the garland tree.
- Take a moment to observe what's written on all the ornaments.
- Call on a few kids to share what they chose to write.
- Invite each kid to take a turn re-arranging two to three ornaments inside the garland.
- Instruct them to start with what they feel is the most important thing about Christmas at the top and the least important at the bottom.
- Give a few kids a chance to share why they chose to re-arrange the ornaments in that way.
- Close by encouraging the entire group to agree on five ornaments that should go at the top of the tree based on how important each one is to Christmas.

Note: This activity is designed to help you better understand where kids are at about what they value most about Christmas, and will help as you move forward with discussions.

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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



2. BIBLE STORY EXTENSION

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

WHAT YOU NEED: Bibles, pens, "Gift Tag Review" Activity Page

WHAT YOU DO:

- Form two teams within your group.
- Instruct the teams to gather in different areas of your group space.
- Give each team a Bible, pens, and 10 gift tags from the "Gift Tag Review" Activity Page.
- Invite a kid on each team to look up John 1:1-5.
 - Provide help as needed.
- Encourage the kid to read the verse aloud to their teams.
- Challenge the teams to work together to identify ten words that stick out to them from the Scripture reading.
- Encourage teams to work together to write each word on separate gift tags.
- When the teams are finished, invite them to the front of your group space.
- Invite teams to share the words on their gift tags and why those words stuck out to them.
- Remind the kids that God always had a plan to send Jesus.
- Ask:
 - How is Jesus the Light of the World?
 - If you had to explain why God sent Jesus in only one sentence, what would you say?
 - God always had a plan to send Jesus. How do each of us fit into that plan?
- Remind kids that people turned away from God, but God had a plan from the start! God sent Jesus, God's WORD, to be a human and live here on earth and make His home with us.
- Say a word from the Scripture reading, and if the team wrote that word down, have them place those tags together in a line.
- Have the groups work together to organize their gift tags.
- Give the kids a few moments to observe the words they chose that were the same as the other team.

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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:

- In what ways is Jesus the best gift ever?
- Why is Jesus' birth such an important part of God's plan?
- Why is Jesus important to you?
- What does it mean to know that God sent Jesus for you? How does it make you feel?

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CHRISTMAS PLAYLIST



LET HEAVEN AND NATURE SING



WEEK
ONE

DECEMBER 2024

SMALL GROUP
PRETEEN

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO MOVE

an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body



4. VERSES TO TAKE WITH YOU

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: Bibles, crepe paper, markers, and gift bows

WHAT YOU DO:

- Form two teams and give each team a Bible.
- Invite teams to look up and read Matthew 1:21 using 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.*

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- Give each team a marker, gift bow, and prepared crepe paper.
- Explain that they will take turns writing the words of Matthew 1:21 on the roll of crepe paper one word at a time.
 - The first kid should write the first word on the end of the crepe paper.
 - Have the kids take turns writing the next word from the verse.
- Instruct the kids to use a gift bow to measure the space between each word.
 - *NOTE: This will help every team have similar lengths after all the words have been written out.*
- Instruct kids to write in large letters.
- When the entire verse has been written, have the group carefully roll the crepe paper back up, being careful not to tear it.
- Begin a game by instructing teams to choose one kid to hold their team's roll of crepe paper and stand across from them.
- Prompt the rest of the kids to take turns saying one word from the verse.
 - Each time a word is said, the kid holding the crepe paper can unravel the roll a bit to reveal the word.
 - If kids are stuck, the kid holding the roll can unravel it to reveal the first letter of the next word as a clue.
 - The kid who recited the word can run over to join the side of the group space that the kid with the crepe paper is on.
- Continue until teams have recited the entire verse.
 - Kids may need to return to the other side if there are still words left in the verse.
- After the verse is revealed, encourage the teams to repeat it aloud together.
- Instruct the teams to re-roll their crepe paper, then repeat as time and interest allow.

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

(4. VERSES TO TAKE WITH YOU, CONTINUED)

- Remind the kids that Joseph believed what the angel spoke in Matthew 1:21 and followed what God was telling him to do.
- Spark discussion about what it means for us to believe that God sent us Jesus so that we could have a relationship with God again.

NOTE: Follow your church's policy for having conversations with kids about Salvation. Involve families in this discussion or decisions as well.

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: Gift bows

WHAT YOU DO:

- Divide the kids into groups of three (a group of two is ok) and give each group a bow.
- Give the kids the following prompt and encourage them to take turns sharing their answers.
 - "Jesus is important to me because . . ."
- Instruct kids to pass the bow to the next person who wants to share in their group.
- Encourage the groups to expand on why Jesus is important to them.
- If kids need prompts to get them thinking, share the following questions with the groups.
 - How has Jesus shown that He loves you?
 - When you think of Jesus, what's the first thing that comes to mind?
 - In what ways is Jesus a special gift?
- Gather the kids back together in your group space and close in prayer by inviting a kid who is willing to pray aloud to do so.

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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 with others and build on their understanding

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Offering container
- Copy or tissue paper cut in half, two to three half sheets for each kid

2. OPENING ACTIVITY

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

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Gift bows in a variety of sizes and colors, ten for each Small Group

Note: Christmas gift bows in a variety of sizes and colors will be used in several activities this month. Look for low-cost bows in bulk.

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 Create: an activity that explores spiritual ideas through the process of drawing, building, and designing

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Pens, one for each kid
- 12-foot silver or green garland, one for each Small Group
- Print "Ornament" Activity Page on cardstock and cut out ornaments, two ornaments for each kid.
 - *Optional:* use colored cardstock

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:

- Bibles, two for each Small Group
- Print "Gift Tag Review" Activity Page on cardstock and cut apart, two sets for each Small Group
- Pens, one for each kid

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 Move: an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Bibles, two for each Small Group
- Markers, two for each Small Group
- Crepe paper
 - Before group time, cut two pieces of 2 ft long crepe paper and roll each piece back up.
- Large gift bows, two 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:

- Gift bows, one for every two to three kids

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.**