

WEEK
TWO
DECEMBER 2021

SMALL GROUP

2-3

TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Tidings of Comfort and Joy

Gabriel Appears to Mary
Luke 1:26-56

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Celebrate because
God has a plan.

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

"God so loved the world that
he gave his one and only Son.
Anyone who believes in him will
not die but will have eternal life."
John 3:16, NIV

MONTHLY LIFE APP

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.

SMALL GROUP

15
MIN

SOCIAL: Providing time for fun interaction

Early Arriver
Opening Activity

LARGE GROUP

35
MIN

STORY: Communicating God's truth in engaging ways **WORSHIP: Inviting people to respond to God**

Welcome/Opener
Worship ("Jingle Bells" from *Jingle Jam: Songs for the Season* and "Greatest Gift Remix" from *Greatest Gift Remix* single)
Bible Story
Bottom Line
Prayer
Closer

SMALL GROUP

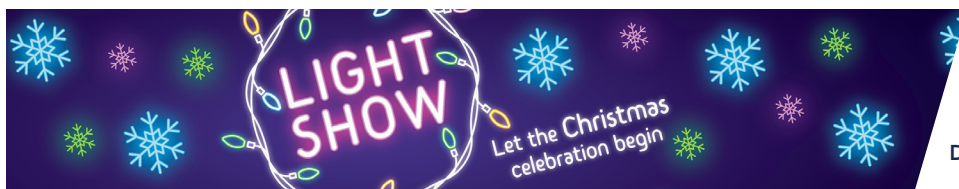
25
MIN

GROUPS: Creating a safe place to connect

Bible Story Review: Scrunch
Application Activity: Origami Candle
Memory Verse Activity: Box Toss
Prayer Activity: Pray and Dismiss

HOME: Prompting action beyond the experience

Parent Cue Card (print or email)
Devotionals for Kids
Parent Cue App



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PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION
15 MINUTES

MADE TO PLAY

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



Before kids arrive, take a few moments to pray for them. Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. Ask God to help kids know what's possible with the power of God! Pray that this joy will bring comfort to the kids for whom Christmas is not always a fun, exciting, and magical time of year.

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

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MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

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MONTHLY LIFE APP

**Christmas—Celebrating Jesus,
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BASIC TRUTH

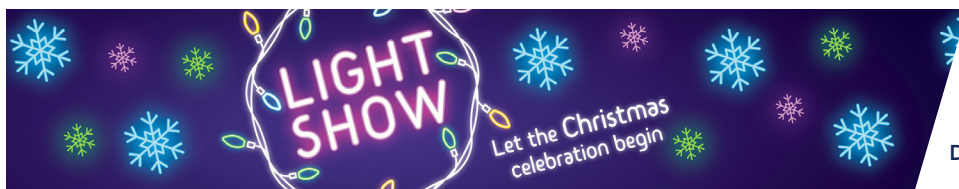
I can trust God no matter what.

1. EARLY ARRIVER

WHAT YOU NEED: Offering container, rolls of white crepe paper, and timer on a watch or smartphone

WHAT YOU DO:

- Welcome kids by name as they arrive.
- Invite kids who brought an offering to put it in the offering container.
- Choose two kids to go first and give each a roll of white crepe paper.
- Instruct the kids to hold the roll of crepe paper in one hand.
- Challenge the kids to see who can unroll the most crepe paper in ten seconds.
- Share these two rules:
 - The kids can't use their hands except to hold the roll of crepe paper.
 - The kids aren't allowed to hold the loose end and toss the roll.
- Time the first set of kids for ten seconds.
- When time is up, tear off the length of paper that each kid unrolled.
- Invite two other kids to compete.
- Continue until everyone has a turn.
- Once everyone has unrolled a segment of paper, compare the strips to see who has the longest piece of crepe paper.
- Repeat as time (and crepe paper) allow. (Consider doing this tournament-style, with the winner of one pair going on to compete against the winner of another pair.)



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15 MINUTES

MADE TO CREATE

an activity that explores ideas through the process of drawing, building, designing, and problem-solving



2. OPENING ACTIVITY

WHAT YOU NEED: "Fingerprint Light Chain" Activity Page strips, paint, plates, wet wipes, tape, and table covering

WHAT YOU DO:

- Cover the work area with the table covering.
- Place a small blob of paint on each plate.
- Set out the plates of paint and the hand wipes on the table covering.
- Give each kid a strip from the "Fingerprint Light Chain" Activity Page.
- Demonstrate how the kids can press their fingers into the paint and onto the top of the bulb on their strip of paper.
- Instruct the kids to use a hand wipe to clean the paint from their finger before changing colors to put their fingerprint on a different bulb.
- Set aside the strips to dry.
- Ask kids to share plans they have for Christmas.
- When the fingerprints are dry, tape the strips together to form a chain of lights to hang in your meeting area.

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Christmas—Celebrating Jesus,
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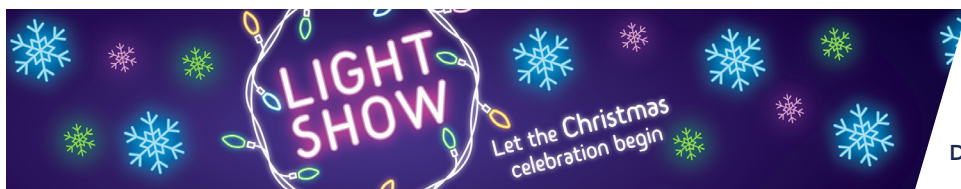
BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

WHAT YOU SAY:

"You guys have some really great plans for Christmas. It's fun to plan what we want to do when we're together with our family and friends—especially at Christmas. Did you know that God has plans, too? His plans are always good, and they never fail. **[Transition]** In today's Bible story, we'll hear about a plan God made long before we were born and before there was even a Christmas to celebrate."

Lead your group to the Large Group area.



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PRELUDE

SOCIAL

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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



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BASIC TRUTH

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1. SCRUNCH

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

WHAT YOU NEED: Bible and bright flashlight

WHAT YOU DO:

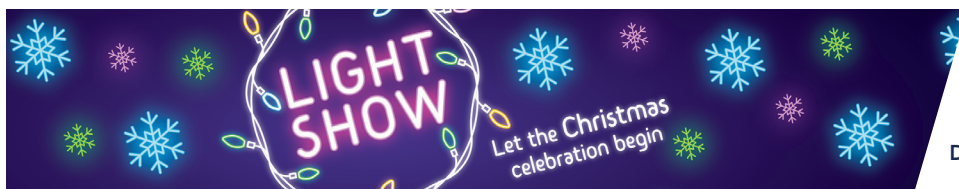
- Direct the kids to form a line in front of you.
- Turn out the lights (if possible), and turn on your flashlight.
- Explain that you will point the flashlight at the feet of one of the kids then ask them to answer a question about the Bible story.
 - Share that if a kid doesn't know the answer, they can ask for a hint or pass to someone else in line.
- Ask one of the questions below.
- After the question is answered correctly, hold the flashlight at your shoulder level with the beam shining in front of the line of kids.
- Challenge all of the kids to scrunch down and walk under the light beam without it touching them.
- Choose another kid to answer a question.
- Once the question is answered correctly, hold the flashlight a little lower for kids to pass under.
- Continue until everyone has answered at least one question.
- Lower the flashlight beam a little more with each round until kids can no longer pass under the light without it shining on them.

Review Questions

- Who came to visit Mary unexpectedly? (*an angel*)
- What was the name of the angel who spoke to Mary? (*Gabriel*)
- Who was Mary engaged to? (*Joseph*)
- In what town was Mary living when the angel came to her? (*Nazareth*)
- How did Mary feel at first when Gabriel came to visit her? (*afraid*)
- What did Gabriel say would happen to Mary? (*she would have a baby*)
- How did Mary respond to Gabriel's message? (*At first she was scared, but she wanted to do whatever God wanted*)
- What did Gabriel tell Mary to name her baby? (*Jesus*)
- What happened when Elizabeth heard Mary's voice? (*the baby inside of her jumped for joy*)
- How long did Mary stay with Elizabeth? (*three months*)
- What did Mary do to celebrate God's plan? (*she praised God with a song*)

WHAT YOU SAY:

"God's plans are amazing, aren't they? His plans are bigger and better than any plans we may make for ourselves. Even our best plans sometimes fail. But we can **celebrate because God has a plan**, and it will NEVER fail. That's because God's plan is the perfect plan. We can trust Him, no matter what. When things don't go the way we want or expect, it helps to remember that God sees everything that's going on—way more than we can see. He had a big plan for Mary, and He has big plans for your life, as well."



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MADE TO CREATE

an activity that explores ideas through the process of drawing, building, designing, and problem-solving



*2. ORIGAMI CANDLE

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Origami Candle" Activity Page, pre-cut strips of heavy paper, scissors, and glue

WHAT YOU DO:

- Give each kid an "Origami Candle" Activity Page.
- Instruct the kids to choose two pre-cut strips of paper.
- Direct kids to follow the steps outlined on the activity page to make an "Origami Candle."
- Instruct the kids to cut out and attach the flame by folding the edge and gluing it to the top of the candle.
- Help kids as needed.
- When finished, remind kids of today's Bottom Line, **celebrate because God has a plan.**
- Direct the kids' attention to the manger and the cross on the flame. Ask:
 - How do you think the manger fit into God's plan?
 - How do you think the cross fit into God's plan?

WHAT YOU SAY:

"God's plan to send Jesus began a long time before the day we now call Christmas. God had promised to send a Savior—a rescuer—who would take the punishment that should have been ours. From the manger to the cross, it was all part of God's great plan to offer forgiveness to anyone who wants it. **Celebrate because God has a plan**, and it's the best plan of all.

"This week, shine the light of God's love to others by showing your candle to someone and sharing how Jesus is part of God's plan for us." **[Make it Personal] (Share one way that you will also try to do this.)**

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MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

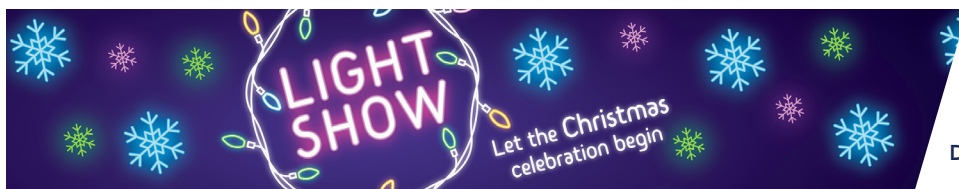
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MADE TO PLAY

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



3. BOX TOSS

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: "John 3:16 Labels" Activity Page tags on prepared gift box; Bibles; and timer on a watch or smartphone

WHAT YOU DO:

- Give each kid a Bible.
- Ask kids to open their Bible to the book of John, using the navigation tips from last week if needed.
- Review that John is the last of the group of four books in the Bible that talk about Jesus' time on Earth.
- Ask, "Can anyone remember the chapter and verse of this month's memory verse?"
- After listening to their responses, help the kids turn to John 3:16.
- Remind kids that John 3:16 describes God's amazing plan for us.
- Help the kids identify four key parts of God's plan by asking the following questions:
 - In God's plan, who does He love? (*the world, all of us*)
 - In God's plan, what did God give? (*Jesus to die in our place so we could be forgiven*)
 - In God's plan, what do we need to believe? (*that Jesus is God's Son who died for us*)
 - In God's plan, what do we need to receive? (*the free gift of God's forgiveness and eternal life*)
- Direct the kids to sit in a circle.
- Give one of the kids the prepared box.
- Instruct the kid to find the first part of John 3:16 on the box and read it aloud.
- Once the part of the verse is read, direct the kid to toss the box across the circle to another kid.
- Direct the next kid to find the next phrase of the memory verse.
- Give them one rule: Kids can't catch the box a second time until everyone has had it once.
- After the entire verse has been said, instruct the kids to do it again.
- Time the kids to see if they can do it in less than 30 seconds.

WHAT YOU SAY:

"The Bible is God's big story. Every book is important because it all speaks to who God is. But of all the verses in the Bible, John 3:16 gives us lots of reasons to **celebrate because God has a plan**. Without the plan to send Jesus, there would be no way for us to be with God. What an amazing gift God offers each of us. All we have to do is believe it and receive it."

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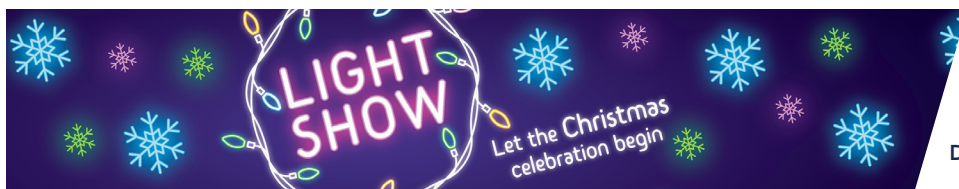
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CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO REFLECT

an activity that creates space
for personal processing
and application



4. PRAY AND DISMISS

[PRAY TO GOD | PRAYER ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: flashlight, music playing device, and Christmas carol

WHAT YOU DO:

- Direct the kids to sit in a circle.
- Give one of the kids a flashlight.
- Instruct the kids to pass the flashlight around the circle as you play a Christmas carol.
- Stop the music and instruct the kid who is holding the flashlight to say, "Dear God, I can celebrate because You have a plan for (name a friend in the circle)."
- Continue until all the kids have had a turn to pray and be prayed for.
- Close your group time in prayer.

WHAT YOU SAY:

"Dear God, we know the names of our friends and can pray for each other, but YOU know EVERYONE and have a plan for each of us. You loved us so much that You gave us the gift of Jesus who came to be our Savior. Help us remember that Jesus is why we have Christmas and to **celebrate because God has a plan** for each of us."

As adults arrive to pick up, invite kids to show them their Origami Candle and explain what the manger and cross have to do with God's plan for us.

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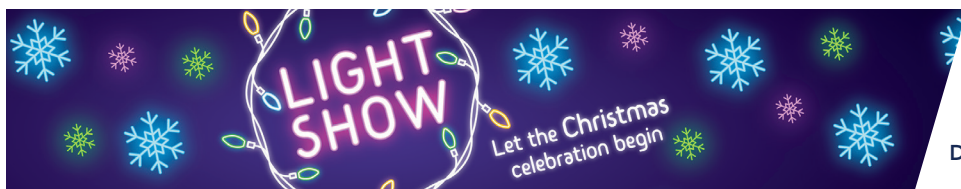
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HOME

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. EARLY ARRIVER

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

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Offering container
- Four rolls of white crepe paper
- Timer on a watch or smartphone

2. OPENING ACTIVITY

Made to Create: an activity that explores ideas through the process of drawing, building, designing, and problem-solving

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Print "Fingerprint Light Chain" Activity Page on cardstock and cut apart; at least two strips for each kid.
- Wet wipes for hands
- Red, green, and yellow poster paint
- Three polystyrene plates
- Clear tape
- Table covering

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.)

* If you don't have time to do all these activities, be sure to do activity #2.

1. SCRUNCH

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

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

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Bible

- Bright flashlight

*2. ORIGAMI CANDLE

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

Made to Create: an activity that explores ideas through the process of drawing, building, designing, and problem-solving

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Print "Origami Candle" Activity Page on paper; one for each kid.
- Heavy wrapping paper, colored printer paper, or construction paper in red, orange, and yellow
 - Cut the paper into 3/4" x 8" strips; two for each kid.
- Glue
- Scissors for each kid

3. BOX TOSS

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

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

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Print "John 3:16 Labels" on colored cardstock and cut out; one set for each small group.
- Bibles
- Gift box of any size—preferably cube shaped
- Christmas wrapping paper
- Glue
- Scissors
- Timer on a watch or smartphone
 - Cover the box with Christmas wrapping paper.
 - Glue one memory verse label to each side of the gift box.

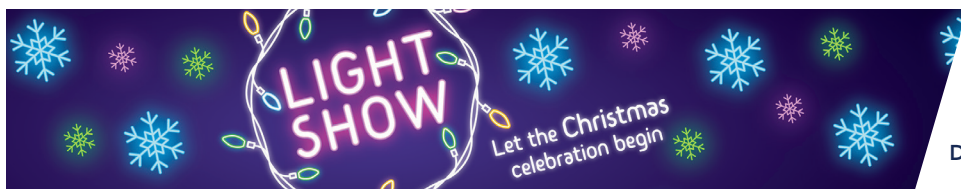
4. PRAY AND DISMISS

[PRAY TO GOD | PRAYER ACTIVITY]

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

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Flashlight
- Music playing device like a smartphone
- Christmas carol on device



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PRELUDE

SOCIAL

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HOME

GETTING READY

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

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.