

WEEK
THREE
DECEMBER 2021

SMALL GROUP

2-3

TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Because of Christmas Day
Jesus Is Born/Shepherds Visit
Luke 2:1-20

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Celebrate because
God sent a Savior.

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 ("Joy to the World (Glory to the King)" from *Joy to the World (Glory to the King)* single and "O Come All Ye Faithful" from *Have a Fancy Yancy Christmas*)
Bible Story
Bottom Line
Prayer
Closer

SMALL GROUP

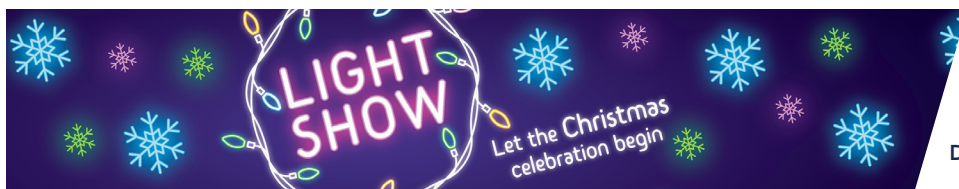
25
MIN

GROUPS: Creating a safe place to connect

Bible Story Review: Gift Bow Grab
Application Activity: Christmas Countdown
Memory Verse Activity: Jingle John 3:16
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 that your kids will not just hear the story of God sending Jesus but that they will understand the depth and importance of His Son being given to us. Ask that each kid will lean into the childlike joy He has placed in each of them and will be full of His light today as they go into this Christmas week!

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**Christmas—Celebrating Jesus,
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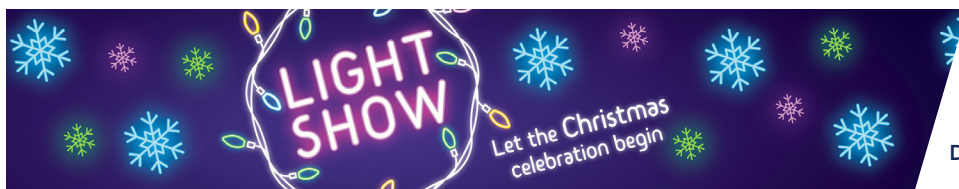
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1. EARLY ARRIVER

WHAT YOU NEED: Offering container, name tags, and markers

WHAT YOU DO:

- Welcome kids by name as they arrive.
- Invite kids who brought an offering to put it in the offering container.
- Give each kid a name tag and a marker.
- Ask kids to pick a food that begins with the first letter of their name and write that food on their name tag.
- Explain how to play the following game:
 - Instruct one kid to say their food name twice followed by the food of another kid twice.
 - Direct the second kid to say their food name twice then the food name of someone else twice.
 - If the kids show their teeth while talking, they (their food) are "taken off the table," which means they're out.
- Play until only one "food" is left on the table (until one kid is left).



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2. OPENING ACTIVITY

WHAT YOU NEED: Paper tubes and small candy canes or other individually wrapped candy

WHAT YOU DO:

- Give each kid one paper tube.
- Instruct the kids to stand in a line shoulder-to-shoulder.
- Direct the kids to hold the tubes end-to-end to form a long, continuous "pipeline."
- Make sure the tubes are angled enough to allow a piece of candy to slide from one end to the other.
 - Test the angle by dropping the candy into the tube at the highest end.
 - Instruct the kids to adjust the angle so the candy slides easily through the tube, but not too fast.
- Explain that you will name a department in a store the kids might visit while doing their Christmas shopping—like the toy department or the electronics department.
- As you name a store department, drop a piece of candy down the shoot.
- Instruct each kid down the line to quickly name something they might buy in that department as a gift for someone.
- Count how many kids can name a gift idea before the candy drops out the end of the tubes.
- After each round, instruct the kid who was at the beginning of the line to move to the end.
- Play several rounds and name a different store department each round.
- Here are some department suggestions:
 - Shoes, Electronics, Toys, Snacks, Clothing, Hardware or tools, Kitchen, Pets, Sporting goods, Furniture, Groceries, Candy, Bedding
- Make sure each kid has least one turn at the head of the line.
- If you choose, let each kid have a piece of candy before heading to Large Group.

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**Christmas—Celebrating Jesus,
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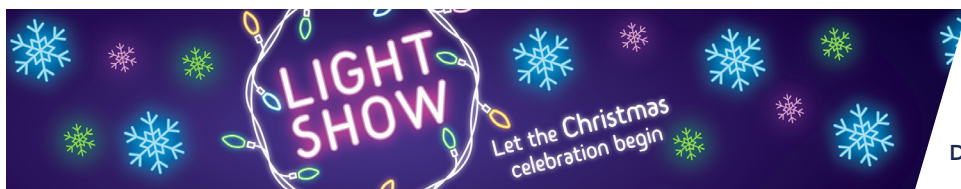
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WHAT YOU SAY:

"We all enjoy shopping for others and finding a gift we know that person wants or needs and will love. We can't always afford expensive gifts, but sometimes even the smallest gift shows we care and means more than those that cost a lot."

"There are all kinds of gifts to be excited about and thankful for, but none are quite as special as God's gift of Jesus. He is the best gift of all. That's why we're taking this month to celebrate His birth. **[Transition] Today, we'll take some time to focus on God's perfect gift and celebrate what Christmas is all about.**"

Lead your group to the Large Group area.



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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



* 1. GIFT BOW GRAB

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

WHAT YOU NEED: Bible and gift bows; Optional
individually wrapped candy

WHAT YOU DO:

- Invite the kids to sit in a circle.
- Place the gift bows in the middle of the circle.
- Explain that you will *slowly* read a question about today's Bible story.
- When a kid thinks they know what the question *will* be, instruct them to grab a bow.
- As soon as a bow is grabbed, stop asking the question.
- If the kid who grabbed the bow first can finish the question correctly, give them a piece of candy (or a point if not using candy).
- If the kid can answer the question as well, give them another piece of candy (or point).
- If the kid who grabbed the bow doesn't finish the question correctly, instruct them to put the bow back. Then you pick up where you left off, letting the rest of the group have a chance to grab the bow and finish the question.
- Use the following review questions:
 - Who was Mary's husband? (*Joseph*)
 - Who issued a decree? (*Caesar Augustus*)
 - What was the decree issued by Caesar Augustus? (*people had to go to their hometown to be counted in a census*)
 - Where did Mary and Joseph have to go to be counted? (*Bethlehem*)
 - Where did Mary and Joseph have to stay when they were in Bethlehem? (*place where animals live*)
 - Where was Jesus placed after He was born? (*feeding trough/manger*)
 - In our Bible story, what were the shepherds doing? (*keeping watch over their flocks*)
 - How did the shepherds feel when the angel appeared? (*afraid*)
 - Where did the shepherds find Jesus? (*lying in a manger*)
 - Who did the shepherds find with Jesus? (*Mary and Joseph*)
 - Who first appeared to the shepherds? (*an angel of the Lord*)
 - Who joined the angel and sang praises to God? (*heavenly host—a bunch of angels*)
 - Who did the shepherds tell about Jesus? (*everyone they saw*)
 - What book of the Bible is our story from today? (*Luke*)
- After the review game, ask kids to share their favorite part of the Christmas story and why they like it most. **[Make it Personal] (Share your favorite part and why, too.)**

WHAT YOU SAY:

"Even though we hear the story of Christmas every year, it never gets old. You and I know some really great news that everyone should hear. God loves the

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MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

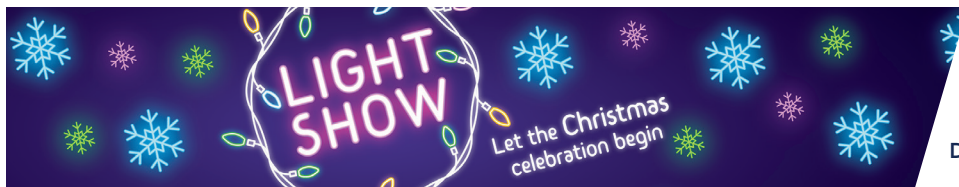
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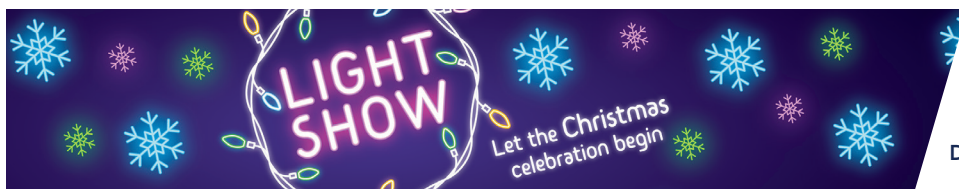
GROUPS

HOME

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

(* 1. GIFT BOW GRAB, CONTINUED)

world so much that He gave us His only Son. Jesus was born so we could have a relationship with God that will last forever. When the shepherds heard this news, they ran to see the baby, Jesus. After they saw Him, they ran to tell others as quickly as possible. And just like the shepherds, God wants us to **celebrate because God sent a Savior**. Let's be as eager as the shepherds to tell others about the incredible gift God gave us when He sent His Son, Jesus. Is there someone you can tell the story of Christmas to this week?" *(Pause for responses.)*



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25 MINUTES

MADE TO CREATE

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



2. CHRISTMAS COUNTDOWN

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Christmas Countdown" Activity Pages, paper plates, brads, glue, markers or crayons, and scissors

WHAT YOU DO:

- Give each kid a paper plate, scissors, and a "Christmas Countdown" Activity Page.
- Set out the markers and glue.
- Invite kids to carefully cut out the pieces on the "Christmas Countdown" Activity Page.
- Instruct the kids to color the carrot orange and the holly red and green.
- Direct the kids to glue each piece onto the paper plate as illustrated.
- Demonstrate how to use the brad to attach the nose of the snowman to the center of the plate.
- Direct the kids to write the numbers 1-6 on the bottom half of the paper plate as shown in the illustration on the "Christmas Countdown" Activity Page.

WHAT YOU SAY:

"There are only six days left until Christmas! Point the carrot on your snowman to the number six. Tomorrow, move it to five. Every day as Christmas gets closer, move the carrot to the next number. Then think of something you can do on each of the remaining days to **celebrate because God sent a Savior**."

"What are some things you can do in the next six days to **celebrate because God sent a Savior**? (Pause for responses.) Those are great answers! Maybe you can listen to some favorite songs that praise God for sending Jesus. Maybe you can lend a hand in helping your family prepare for guests who will celebrate with you. Or maybe you just want to take a few minutes each day to stop and thank God for this wonderful season in which we can give, receive, and—most of all—remember how God showed His great love for us by sending His Son."

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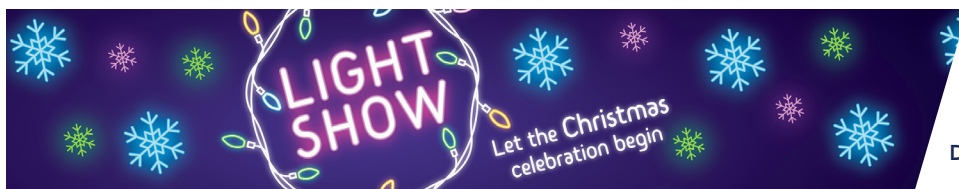
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25 MINUTES

MADE TO CONNECT

an activity that invites kids to share and collaborate with others while growing their understanding



3. JINGLE JOHN 3:16

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: Bibles; Optional voice changing app

WHAT YOU DO:

- Make sure each kid has a Bible.
- Ask:
 - Can you remember the book of the Bible this month's memory verse is from? (*John*)
 - Can you remember the chapter and verse of this month's memory verse? (3:16)
- Invite kids to look up the verse in their Bibles.
- Invite a kid to read the verse out loud to the group.
- Ask the kids which words of the verse they think are the most important and why.
- Challenge the kids to close their Bibles and find John 3:16 on their own without help.
- Ask the kids to share a favorite song they like to sing at Christmas.
- As a group, try singing John 3:16 to the tune of a familiar Christmas song one of the kids named.
- Try it again with two or three other favorite Christmas songs. This might be a challenge, but it will be fun!
- *Option: Download a voice changing app to your phone or device. Let kids take turns saying the memory verse in a silly voice.*

WHAT YOU SAY:

"John 3:16 is such a great reminder to **celebrate because God sent a Savior**. It reminds us of how much God loves us. Jesus did something for us that we could not do for ourselves. He made a way for our sins to be forgiven so that we can have a relationship with God that will last forever. That's great news! Whoever believes what Jesus did for them can have life forever with God—that's the incredible message of John 3:16. And that's also the message of Christmas that we can celebrate, be grateful for, and share with others."

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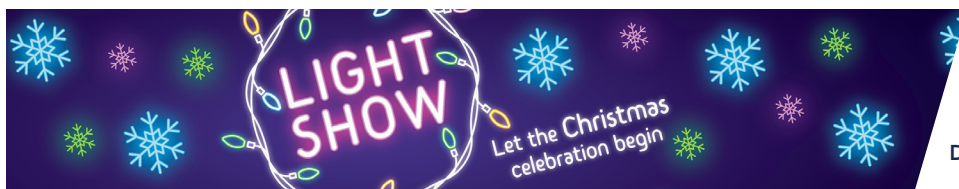
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CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO REFLECT

an activity that creates space
for personal processing
and application



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4. PRAY AND DISMISS [PRAY TO GOD | PRAYER ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: Nativity set figures, music playing device, and Christmas carol

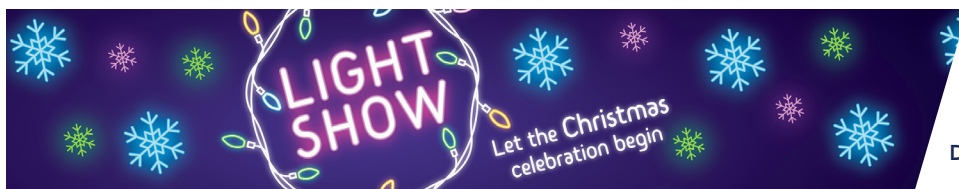
WHAT YOU DO:

- Instruct the kids to sit in a circle.
- Give several kids a nativity set figure.
- Pass the figures around the circle as you play a Christmas carol.
- Stop the music and instruct the kid who is holding baby Jesus to pray, "Dear God, thank You for sending Jesus to be our Savior."
- Continue until all the kids have had a turn praying.
- Close your group time in prayer.

WHAT YOU SAY:

"Dear God, thank You for loving us and giving us Jesus. As we look forward to all the fun of Christmas this week, help us remember to **celebrate because God sent a Savior**. Remind us to be grateful for what You've given us and share Your love with others this Christmas. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

As adults arrive to pick up, encourage kids to show them their "Christmas Countdown" snowman.



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PRELUDE

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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
- Adhesive name tags—one for each kid
- Markers

2. OPENING ACTIVITY

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

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Wrapping paper or paper towel tubes—one for each kid
- Small candy canes (or other individually wrapped candy) that will slide through the paper tubes—enough for several rounds of a game and to give one to each kid if desired

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 #1.

* 1. GIFT BOW GRAB

[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
- Gift bows—one for each kid

- Optional small pieces of individually wrapped candy such as Starburst® or Hershey's® Kisses

2. CHRISTMAS COUNTDOWN

[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 "Christmas Countdown" Activity Page on heavy paper or cardstock; one for each kid.
- Paper plates, dinner size—one for each kid
- Brads
- Glue
- Markers or crayons in black, red, orange, and green
- Scissors for each kid

3. JINGLE JOHN 3:16

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

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

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Bibles
- Option: Download a voice changing app to your smartphone or other device.

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:

- Nativity set figures
- Music playing device like a smartphone
- Christmas carol on the device

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.**