



WEEK
ONE
DECEMBER 2021

SMALL GROUP
PRETEEN

TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Nine Months
Elizabeth & Zechariah
Luke 1:5-25, 57-66

TODAY'S KEY QUESTION

What are some
things you celebrate?

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Celebrate because
God can do anything.

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

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 ("12 Days of Christmas" from *Jingle Jam: Wrapped Up*, "Joy to the World (Glory to the King)" from *Joy to the World (Glory to the King)* single, and "Greatest Gift Remix" from *Greatest Gift Remix* single)
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 Review 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



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PRELUDE

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HOME

PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION
15 MINUTES

MADE TO MOVE

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



Before kids arrive, take a few minutes to sit in quiet prayer for your students and the time you're about to spend together. Pray that you would be able to help them grow in their confidence that God is who he says He is and still can do things in our lives that we think are impossible.

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**What are some
things you celebrate?**

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

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**Christmas—Celebrating Jesus,
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1. JUST FOR FUN

WHAT YOU NEED: Offering container, candy canes, two buckets, mobile device or timer

WHAT YOU DO:

- Invite kids to put their offerings in the offering container as they arrive.
- Divide the group into two teams.
- Tell teams to stand in a line.
- Give each kid a candy cane.
- Place a bucket of candy canes at one end of each team's line.
- Place an empty bucket at the other end of each team's line.
- Tell teams they have two minutes to transfer the candy canes from one bucket to the other.
- The rules are:
 - Teams must use the candy canes they are holding to pass candy canes from the bucket to each other. No one can touch the candy cane they are transporting with any part of their body.
 - If a candy cane falls, teams can opt to retrieve it using the candy cane they are holding or just leave it on the ground and start over with a new candy cane.
 - The team to transfer the most candy canes from one bucket to the other in the allotted time is the winner.
- Play a few rounds. If necessary, vary the time of each race.



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PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION
15 MINUTES

MADE TO EXPLORE

an activity that extends learning
through hands-on experimentation
and discovery



2. OPENING ACTIVITY

WHAT YOU NEED: Chairs, garland or string, candy canes

WHAT YOU DO:

- Place two chairs about three feet apart with the backs of the chairs facing each other.
- Tie a piece of garland between two chairs.
- Give each kid a candy cane.
- Challenge kids to stand on the chair and see if they can drop a candy cane so it hooks onto the garland.

WHAT YOU SAY:

"This was a challenging activity. Some of us we would even say it was impossible to do. **[Transition]** Let's head to Large Group to hear a story of the impossible being possible."

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

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CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO PLAY

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



1. TAKE A SNAPSHOT

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: Paper, pencils, mobile device or timer

WHAT YOU DO:

- Gather kids in a circle.
- Hand out the paper and pencils.
- Ask: What are some things people celebrate?
- Let kids make a list of things people celebrate. Encourage them to be creative with their answers.
- Give kids a time limit (1-2 minutes) to complete their list.
- When time is up, go around the circle with each kid giving one example they wrote on their paper. If no one else in the group wrote the same thing, award the kid a point.
- Allow kids to defend their examples, if necessary. Some of them may try to come up with some "unique" things to celebrate in order to win the game.
- Declare the kids with the most points the winner.

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MADE TO IMAGINE

an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates concrete application through role-play and reenactment



2. BIBLE STORY EXTENSION

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Story Sentence Cards" Activity Page, Bibles

WHAT YOU DO:

- Give each kid a "Story Sentence Card."
- Tell kids read the card to themselves without showing it to the other kids in the group.
- Challenge kids to form a line so their cards are in the order of the story.
- The catch is that to get in the correct order they can't talk to each other and they can only show two other people what's on their card.
- Once the group thinks they have the right order, tell kids to lay their cards face up in front of them.
- Read the cards out loud in the order they are placed on the floor.
- The correct order is:
 - Zechariah and Elizabeth loved and served God. They were unable to have kids.
 - Zechariah was chosen to burn incense before God in the temple while the other priests waited outside.
 - An angel appeared and said Zechariah and Elizabeth would have a son who would prepare the way for the Lord.
 - Zechariah thought it was impossible and didn't believe what the angel said and so the angel said Zechariah would have to be silent and unable to speak until his son was born.
 - Elizabeth became pregnant and gave birth to a son.
 - The people celebrated and were going to name them Zechariah, like his father. Elizabeth said, "No, he must be called John."
 - Zechariah asked for something to write and wrote, "His name is John."
 - Right away Zechariah could speak and right away he praised and celebrated God.
- Ask:
 - Are there any changes you want to make to the order?
 - Is there anything you want to add that is missing from the storyline?
- Potential discussion questions:
 - How did Zechariah respond to the angel? (Refer to Luke 1:12, 1:18)
 - Why do you think Zechariah questioned the angel?
 - When is it easy to give up, to lose hope, and stop believing something good could happen?
 - What are some things in the story worth celebrating?
 - Why is this story part of the Christmas story? What does it have to do with Jesus?

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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. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

WHAT YOU NEED: No supplies needed

WHAT YOU DO:

Ask:

- Why did people think they baby should be named Zechariah? Does anyone know why it was unusual for Zechariah and Elizabeth to name the baby John? *(It may be necessary to explain the culture was to name babies after a family member. Zechariah or Elizabeth did not have a relative named John.)*
- How were Zechariah and Elizabeth celebrating God by naming the baby John? *(Zechariah and Elizabeth were obeying God even though it was different from the "norm".)*
- God can do anything but sometimes He doesn't do what we think He should. What can help you to remember to celebrate God even when things don't go your way?
 - **[Make It Personal]** Share about a time when thing didn't go the way you thought they should, but you were able to see God's hand in the situation. Were you able to celebrate God's "version" of the story?
- What are some impossible things has God done? *(Examples can be from the Bible or from their own lives.)*

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25 MINUTES

MADE TO CREATE

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



4. VERSE TO TAKE WITH YOU

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: Beads, pipe cleaners, Bibles, optional: mobile device

WHAT YOU DO:

- Gather kids in a circle and give kids a Bible.
- Look up John 3:16 and read the verse aloud.

Note: This is a familiar verse, but don't assume everyone in your group has heard it. Consider looking it up and allow kids to recite it. Kids unfamiliar with the verse can follow along in the Bible. Be prepared to look up different translations using a mobile device.

Finding verses with 4th-5th graders: Our verse is from John. Ask kids to tell you whether that's in the Old Testament or the New Testament. (New) So we know it's toward the back of the Bible. It's the last of the four gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John). When they find John, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Tell them to find chapter 3. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Tell them to find verse 16 in chapter 3.

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- Give kids a pipe cleaner and a handful of beads.
- Instruct kids to make a pipe cleaner candy cane by threading beads on the pipe cleaner.
- For each bead that kids thread on their pipe cleaner, challenge them to give an example of something God has done.
- Encourage kids to give examples from the Bible and from their own lives.
- Instruct kids to bend the pipe cleaner to make the shape of a candy cane.
- When kids are done creating their candy canes, look up and read Luke 18:27 to the group.
- Ask:
 - Why is it important to remember God can do anything?
- Encourage kids to hang their candy cane on their Christmas tree or somewhere in their home to remind them God can do anything.



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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



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

WHAT YOU NEED: "Light Bulb Cards" Activity Page,
scissors, hole punch, markers, string/yarn, Optional: a
Christmas tree or other way to display the "Lights"

WHAT YOU DO:

- Give kids a "Light Bulb Card" and tell them to cut out the light bulb.
- Ask kids to write a prayer praising God for who He is.
- Instruct kids to use the hole punch to make a hole at the top of their light bulb.
- Help kids create a string of "celebration lights" by tying their light bulb onto a long piece of string.
- Space out the light bulbs along the string.
- Encourage the kids to take turns reading to the group what they wrote as a prayer.
- Place the string of lights on a Christmas tree or tape them to the wall.
- Save any extra "Light Bulb Cards" to be used next week.
- Close in prayer.

WHAT YOU SAY:

"God, as we hear the story of Zechariah and Elizabeth, we are reminded nothing is impossible for You. You can do anything! We can trust You no matter what! You are *(allow kids to fill in the blank)*! Thank You for being You! Thank You for loving us so much You sent Jesus so we can believe and have eternal life! We love You! Amen!"

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Luke 1:5-25, 57-66

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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. JUST FOR FUN

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

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Offering container
- Buckets, two for each Small Group
 - Fill buckets with 10-15 regular sized candy canes.
 - Do not use the mini candy canes.
- Candy canes, regular size.
 - Provide one candy cane for each kid in addition to the candy canes in the buckets.
 - Do not use the mini candy canes. Extra candy canes can be used for Verses to Take with You Activity in week four.
- Mobile device or timer

2. OPENING ACTIVITY

Made to Explore: an activity that extends learning through hands-on experimentation and discovery

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Chairs, two per Small Group
- Tinsel garland or string at least 5' long, one for each Small group
 - The garland can be longer than 5', but if it is shorter, it will be difficult for Small Group Leaders to tie it between the two chairs. The garland can be re-used for activities in weeks three and four.
- Candy canes, one per kid.
 - Do not use mini candy canes. Extra candy canes can be used for Verses to Take with You Activity in week four.

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 or #3.*

1. TAKE A SNAPSHOT

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

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

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Paper
- Pencils/markers
- Mobile device or timer

* 2. BIBLE STORY EXTENSION

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

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

WHAT YOU NEED:

- "Story Sentence Cards" Activity Page, one set for each Small Group
- Bibles

* 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. VERSE TO TAKE WITH YOU

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

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

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Pipe cleaners, one for each kid.
 - Ideally red, white or green, but any color will work.



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HOME

GETTING READY

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

- Beads, fifteen of each color for each kid.
 - Provide about 15 of each color per kid.
- Bibles
- *Optional:* Mobile device

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:

- "Light Bulb Cards" Activity Page printed on colored paper and cut apart, one per kid.
- Save any extra "Light Bulb Cards" to be used in weeks three and four.
- Markers
- Hole punch, at least one for each Small Group
- A ball of string or yarn, one for each Small Group
- Scissors
- A Christmas Tree, one for each environment.
 - Throughout the month of December, kids will be creating a "String of Lights" during the Prayer Activity. If you choose not to provide a Christmas tree, provide another way for kids to hang their "String of Lights." Other options to consider:
 - Create an outline of a tree on a wall using tape.
 - Cut a Christmas tree out of a large green tablecloth and adhere to the wall. This allows you to roll up the tree and store it elsewhere for future weeks.
 - Simply string the "Lights" throughout the environment.

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.