



TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Tidings of Comfort and Joy
Gabriel Appears to Mary
Luke 1:26-56

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.

TODAY'S KEY QUESTION

When has something worked out differently than you expected?

SMALL GROUP

15
MIN

SOCIAL: Providing time for fun interaction

Just for Fun
Opening Activity

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Celebrate because
God has a plan.

LARGE GROUP

35
MIN

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

Welcome/Opener
Worship ("Hark the Herald Angels Sing" from *Jingle Jam: Songs for the Season*, "Angels We Have Heard on High" from *Have a Fancy Yancy Christmas*, and "Greatest Gift Remix" from *Greatest Gift Remix* single)
Bible Story (Communicator Script)
Key Question
Prayer

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

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

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

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 CREATE

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



Before kids arrive, pray that you would have an amazing time with them in Small Group today. Ask God for patience as the kids get more and more excited about all of the Christmas celebrations around them, and ask Him for creativity to channel that excitement into incredible conversations.

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1. JUST FOR FUN

WHAT YOU NEED: Offering container, a piece of garland

WHAT YOU DO:

- Invite kids to put their offerings in the offering container as they arrive.
- Gather kids in a circle.
- Set a piece of garland in the center of the circle.
- Challenge kids to take turns "drawing" an object with the garland. (i.e., placing the garland in the shape of an object).
- Let the group guess what the artist is "drawing."
- Some ideas in case kids need inspiration: a star, a Christmas tree, a snowman, etc.

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TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

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MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

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BASIC TRUTH

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PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION
15 MINUTES

MADE TO PLAY

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



2. OPENING ACTIVITY

WHAT YOU NEED: Sets of "Light Bulb Cards" Activity Page, string, clips

WHAT YOU DO:

- Divide the group into teams of three.
- Give each team some "Light Bulb Cards," dividing the colors up evenly as best as you can.
- Tell kids to grab two cards and hold one card in each hand.
- Tell teams to turn their back to you.
- Create a "String of Lights" by clipping a set of light bulb cards onto a piece of string or yarn.
- Hold up the "String of Lights" and when you say, "Lights on," teams turn around and race to duplicate the pattern on your string of lights.
- The challenge is that kids cannot swap cards, so they may get very tangled up trying to hold their lights in order.

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WHAT YOU SAY:

"Do you put up Christmas lights for Christmas? They can be a tangled mess and trying to get them on the tree doesn't always go quite as expected.

[Transition] Let's head to Large Group to hear a story about a woman whose life took an unexpected turn."

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

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. TAKE A SNAPSHOT
[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]
WHAT YOU NEED: Ornaments, gift bags

WHAT YOU DO:
• Pair kids up and guide kids to stand about 10 feet away from their teammates.

- For each pair, give one kid five ornaments and give the other kid a Christmas gift bag. Instruct kids to hold the gift bag behind their backs.
- Ask pairs to predict how many ornaments they can toss into their gift bags. Tell teams to share their plan with the rest of the group.
- Tell teams to begin tossing their ornaments into the gift bags.
- To make it a competition, if teams successfully predict the number they catch, they get a point for every ornament they caught.
- The team with the most points wins.
- Play several rounds, with teammates switching roles each round.
- Depending on the skill of your group, increase or decrease the distance required to toss the ornaments.
- Potential wrap-up questions:
 - There were some rounds you thought would turn out different than they did. Can you think of a time that something worked out differently than you expected?
 - **[Make it Personal] (Share about a time when something worked out differently than you expected.)**
 - How do you respond when things don't go your way?

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25 MINUTES

MADE TO IMAGINE

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

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2. BIBLE STORY EXTENSION

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Mary's Song" Activity Page, markers, Bibles

WHAT YOU DO:

- Review the story by saying, "An angel showed up in Nazareth . . ." and then encourage the group to fill in the details.
- Prompt kids by asking, "What next?" (*Allowing kids to retell the story in their own words will give you an idea what "stuck" from Large Group and provide an opportunity to fill in details by asking guiding questions.*)
- Remind kids that Luke recorded a song that Mary sang during her visit with Elizabeth (Luke 1:46-55).
- Give each kid a "Mary's Song" Activity Page.
- Read the song aloud.
- Ask:
 - Why is Mary singing a song to God?
 - Do you think this song is a celebration song? Why or why not?
 - What does Mary say about God in her song? Tell kids to underline what Mary says about God in her song. Allow kids to share what they underlined.
 - Mary's song ends with "He has done it just as he promised to our people of long ago." What was part of God's plan from long ago that He promised?
- Give kids a few minutes to write (on the back of the Activity Page) a song or poem celebrating God who He is and for what He has done.
- Give kids the opportunity to share or perform their songs/poems.

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
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:

- What do we know about God’s plan? How is Jesus part of God’s plan?
- When is it hard to remember to celebrate that God has a plan for us to be with Him now and forever?
- How can we remember to celebrate that God’s plan is so much bigger and better than we can imagine?

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4. VERSE TO TAKE WITH YOU

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Celebration Cards" and "Celebration Action Cards" Activity Pages, Bibles, pencils

WHAT YOU DO:

- Divide the group into two teams.
- Gather teams together at one end of the environment.
- Shuffle together a set of cards for each team and lay the cards face down in a 4x3 grid, one grid across from each team.
- Guide the teams to race to collect the four verse cards.
- Kids will take turns racing to the grid and selecting a card. If the card has a celebration graphic on it, they return to their team with the card.
- However, if the card doesn't have any art/graphics on it, they read the card, replace it face down on the grid and complete the action on the card.
- The first team to collect the six verse cards and put them in the correct order (John 3:16), wins.
- After a winner is declared, gather the group together.
- Ask:
 - What does John 3:16 tell us about God's plan?
 - Why would it be good to memorize John 3:16? How can this verse help you to remember to celebrate God's plan?
- To dig deeper, consider looking up the following verses and asking:
 - Ephesians 1:4: What does this verse say about God's plan?
 - Matthew 1:23: Matthew is quoting something the prophet Isaiah wrote over 700 years before Jesus was born. (Refer to Isaiah 7:14) Why is the fact Jesus was called "Immanuel" something to celebrate?
 - Isaiah 55:10-11: What does God tell us about the power of His Words? How does this verse help us to trust God and His plan no matter what?
 - Which verse resonates with you? Challenge kids to select one of these verses to memorize.

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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" from Social, scissors, markers, hole punch, string/yarn, *Optional:* a Christmas tree or other way to display the "Lights"

WHAT YOU DO:

- Give kids a "Light Bulb Card" and ask them to cut out the light bulb.
- Instruct kids to write on the light bulb a prayer thanking God for His plan.
- Encourage kids to use John 3:16 as a guide for their prayer.
- 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 what they wrote out loud.
- Place the string of lights on a Christmas tree or tape them to the wall, like last week.
- Save any extra cards to be used next week.
- Close in prayer.

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WHAT YOU SAY:

"God, what a story you have given us! The Bible tells of Your love for us starting at the very beginning, and each story points us to You and Your plan. Thank You for loving us so much You planned a way we could be with You now and forever. Thank You for giving us Jesus—Your greatest gift! We can trust You to keep Your promise. Remind us every day Your plan is perfect! Amen!



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

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Offering container
- A long piece of garland, at least one for each Small Group.

2. OPENING ACTIVITY

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

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Three copies of "Light Bulb Cards" Activity Page, one card for each kid
 - Print each set on a different color of paper
- A piece of string or yarn about 20" long, one for each Small Group.
- Clips, six for each Small Group.
 - These can be paper clips, binder clips, clothespins, etc.

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 #4.

1. TAKE A SNAPSHOT

[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:

- Ornaments, five for every two kids
 - Unbreakable, non-glass balls.
- Christmas gift bags, one per every two kids.
 - The gift bag needs be able to hold at least five ornaments. The gift bags can be re-used for the Get Your Head in the Game Activity for week three.

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:

- "Mary's Song" Activity Pages printed on paper, one half page per kid.
- Markers/pencils
- 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:

- Print the "Celebration Cards" Activity Page printed and cut apart, two sets for each Small Group
- Print the "Celebration Action Cards" Activity Page and cut apart; two set for each group
- Bibles
- Pencils/markers

5. MAKE IT PERSONAL WITH PRAYER

[PRAY TO GOD | PRAYER ACTIVITY]

Made to Reflect: an activity that creates space for personal



WEEK
TWO
DECEMBER 2021

SMALL GROUP
PRETEEN

PRELUDE **SOCIAL** **STORY** **WORSHIP** **GROUPS** **HOME**

GETTING READY

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

processing and application

WHAT YOU NEED:

- "Light Bulb Cards," one for each kid.
 - You can use the "Light Bulb Cards" from the Opening Activity or any extra "Light Bulb Cards" from week one.
- 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.**