



WEEK FIVE – DECEMBER 2019 – SECOND/THIRD

Bible Story: *Led by the Light • Matthew 2:1-12*

Bottom Line: *You can find joy when you search for God.*

Memory Verse: *“Always be joyful because you belong to the Lord. I will say it again. Be joyful!”*
Philippians 4:4

Life App: *Joy—Finding a way to be happy, even when things don’t go your way*

Basic Truth: *I need to make the wise choice.*

Summary: In Matthew 2:1-12, we see how the announcement of Jesus’ birth was far-reaching. Wise men from the East saw a star that set them on an adventure to find a promised King of Israel. When they finally found Jesus, they worshipped Him as king. God protected Jesus and the Wise Men from Herod’s plot to kill Jesus.

PRE-SERVICE ACTIVITIES

1. Early Arriver Idea

Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

What You Need: N/A

What You Do:

- Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and asking about their past week
- Invite kids to place their offerings in the *For Everyone* box on the wall near the main entrance
- As kids arrive, ask kids: “Have you ever lost something that you needed to find?”
- As you discuss the question, begin playing a game of “I Spy.”
- Start by saying, “I spy something . . .” and insert the color of an object you see in the room.
- Keep kids on their toes by making sure you’re not looking directly at the object.
- Let kids take turns guessing what the object is.
- Allow kids to have a turn spying something.
- During each round, you could let the kid who guessed correctly become the new person who is “spying.”

2. Search and Find

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

What You Need: “Search-and-Find Picture” Activity Pages, markers

What You Do:

- Give each kid an Activity Page and a marker.
- Challenge kids to find and circle all of the items noted on the page.
- As they finish, they can color the page.

What You Say:

“What were some of the items you searched for and found on that picture? (Pause for responses.) [Transition] Let’s go to Large Group, where we’ll find out about something else we can search for.”

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

LARGE GROUP

OVERVIEW:

Bottom Line: *You can find joy when you search for God. When we believe that Jesus is the promised One sent from God to rescue us from our sins, we become part of God’s story. That story isn’t something we can keep to ourselves. It’s a story we need to share with everyone.*

SMALL GROUP

1. Searching for God**[Application Activity]**

Imagine: an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play

What You Need: “Searching for God” journals (Activity Pages), markers

What You Do:

- Provide each kid with a journal and a marker.
- Encourage them to begin by only decorating the front and back covers of their journals.
- Once they have finished, instruct kids to open their journals to the first page.
- Explain that they can use this journal throughout their week to search for God every day.
- Prompt them with examples such as:
 - “Maybe you looked for God in your day and saw a beautiful sunset that made you think of Him and what a great Creator He is!”
 - “Maybe your brother was really getting on your nerves and God helped you calm down and be kind to him anyway.”
- Give kids a few moments to fill out Day One of their journal and to think through how they saw God in their day today.
- Prompt them with more examples such as:
 - “Maybe you hung out with your friends at church today and they reminded you of God’s love!”
 - “Maybe you had a little bit of an attitude this morning before church but your mom still forgave you and it reminded you of how God forgives us.”
- Walk around and help any kids who need it.

What You Say:

“The truth is, we can see God all day long if we just look and pay attention. God is everywhere! From the beautiful nature outside to the friends and family who show us love, God shows Himself through many people, places, and things. This week, I want you to wake up each morning and ask God to help you see Him throughout your day. Whenever you do, I want you

*to flip open your journal and write down your thoughts and feelings. I am confident that this will be one of your best weeks yet because **[Bottom Line]** you can find joy when you search for God.”*

[Make It Personal] *(Share a personal example from a time when you really needed joy and you found God through a friend, or God provided something you needed. Or perhaps you simply saw God’s creativity through nature and it gave you joy.)*

2. New Year Noisemaker!

[Memory Verse Activity]

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

What You Need: “New Year Noisemaker” Activity Pages, markers, crayons, noisemakers

What You Do:

- Give each kid a mouth outline.
- Set out the markers and crayons and let kids fill in the rest of the details of the mouth: the lips and teeth.
- Once they are finished, give each kid a noisemaker.
- Show kids how to push their noisemaker through the X on the mouth.
- Encourage them to practice blowing their “New Year Noisemaker”!
- Recite this month’s memory verse and instruct kids to blow their noisemaker every time the word “joy” pops up and then again when the verse is finished.

What You Say:

*“I think you guys are all set for whatever New Year’s plans you have! You’ll definitely be the loudest ones wherever you go. As funny sounding—and funny looking—as these mouths are, they really do remind me of what joy can look like! When we are full of joy, we are bright and loud and make a beautiful noise telling everyone how great God is. This week, use your noisemakers to tell everyone you know that **[Bottom Line]** you can find joy when you search for God.”*

3. Pray and Dismiss

[Prayer Activity]

Reflect: an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application

What You Need: N/A

What You Do:

- Pray for your kids in the new year ahead.

- Using the prayer example below, add details based on what you know about your few, praying words of life over them for the year to come.

What You Say:

*“Dear God, we pray that this next year would be the best year yet! We ask that it would be a year of growing closer to You and learning more about You. We know that the world around us tells us to search for joy in many different things: friends, clothes, sports, or our success in school. But we understand those things are only temporary, while You offer a permanent joy that lasts! When things aren’t going our way, teach us that **[Bottom Line]** you can find joy when you search for God.”*

*As adults arrive to pick up, have each kid display their journal. Ask them, “How did you see God in your day today?” Encourage kids to write in their journal each day this week and to share it with at least one other person. Remind them to search for Him each day because **[Bottom Line]** you can find joy when you search for God.*