



## WEEK THREE – DECEMBER 2019 – PRETEEN

**Bible Story:** *Born to Be Our Friend* • Luke 1:26–56

**Key Question:** *What are some ways to find joy when you're afraid?*

**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 can trust God no matter what.*

**Summary:** We continue the story of Christmas in Luke 1:26–56. The Messiah had been promised for generations, but no one would have guessed that God would use a young woman to bring that promise to fulfillment— including that young woman herself. Mary was awestruck when the angel came to announce that she was about to have a child who would be the Savior of the world. She finds joy, trusting that God is up to something bigger than she could have possibly imagined.

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## PRE–SERVICE ACTIVITY

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### 1. Get Your Head in the Game

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

**What You Need:** Index cards; markers

**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
- Use the ribbon or rope to create a 40” (diameter) circle on the floor for each team.
- Choose teams of even numbers (two, four, six, eight, or even one team of ten).
- Ask teams to stand around the circle of ribbon or rope.
- Challenge them to switch places with the person directly across from them without touching. (If there’s any question as to who qualifies as “across” from whom, help kids confirm who they are supposed to switch places with.)
  - Everyone must step into the circle as they cross.
  - The first team to succeed is the winner.
  - Warn that if anyone makes contact with the person they are switching places with, both kids must freeze for five second.
- Decrease the size of the rope circle then play again allowing kids to come up with ideas to better their time.

**What You Say:**

*“This is one game God would never play—that is, if God ever played Small Group games. He’s all about being close to us—not keeping us away. No matter where we are, day or night, God wants us to know He’s there with us. That’s a reason to have joy. **Let’s go to Large Group and hear about it.**”*

**Lead your group to the Large Group area.**

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## LARGE GROUP

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**OVERVIEW:**

**Key Question:** *What are some ways to find joy when you’re afraid?* Some of the most difficult times to find joy are in those moments when we are scared of what might happen next. We hope that as kids discover more about joy, they’ll figure out how they can choose joy no matter what they face.

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## SMALL GROUP

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### 1. Take a Snapshot

#### [Application Activity]

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

**What You Need:** Paper plates; markers

#### What You Do:

- Give each of the kids a paper plate and a marker.
- Instruct kids to place the plates on top of their heads.
- Tell them to use the marker to write about or draw something they are afraid of but not to let others see what it is.
- When they've finished, let the kids take turns showing what they wrote or drew. Before they talk about their drawings, let others guess what they are.
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#### What You Say:

*“Fear comes in all shapes and sizes. Your fears may be different from someone else’s, but everyone has something that freaks them out. It might be spiders, being up in front of an audience, wild storms, trying new things, or being alone . . . the list goes on and on. Whatever is on your ‘Freak Out List,’ God can help you face it. He’s not afraid of ANYTHING. God’s with you all the time, and if you’re a follower of Jesus, He sends His Spirit to be with you as well. He’s got your back. Not only your back, He’s all around you—front, sides, from the top of your head to the soles of your feet. Fear doesn’t have a chance when we turn it over to God and trust Him. He gives us peace and joy even in scary situations because we know He’s with us.”*

### 2. Discussion Questions

#### [Application Activity]

*Connect: an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding*

**What You Need:** N/A

#### What You Do:

- Ask:
  - What are some things that you believe are true about God?
  - How can those things that can help you when you’re afraid?
  - What are some reasons we feel afraid?
  - Is fear ever a GOOD thing? When and why?

- (Word Nerd Alert!) What does omnipresence mean? (The ability to be everywhere at the same time.) God is omnipresent. Why is that a big deal?
- How does knowing that God is omnipresent give you joy?

### 3. Make It Personal with Prayer

#### [Prayer Activity]

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

**What You Need:** Paper; pens

#### **What You Do:**

- *(Note: Be sensitive to kids in your group who do or do not believe or don't celebrate Santa Claus. Steer the conversation to be about comparing Christmas traditions, not about debating or discussing if it's right or wrong.)*
- Ask your group if they agree or disagree with the following statement: It seems like Santa Claus gets more attention at Christmas than Jesus does.
- Talk about how lots of kids often write Santa letters, visit him at the mall, and wait for him to squeeze down the chimney to leave them their favorite gifts.
- Instead of writing a letter to Santa or focusing on the side of Christmas that leaves Jesus out, encourage kids to write a letter to God asking Him for the gift of joy in a situation they are concerned about or feel afraid.
- Invite those who are willing to share their letters with one another when finished.

#### **What You Say:**

*“Dear God, we’re so grateful that you give us joy that lasts longer than Christmas Day, because You saw our sin problem and gave us a Savior we can be forgiven. Thank you for being the joy-giver who promises to always be with us. In Jesus’ name, amen.”*