



PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION
15 MINUTES

MADE TO CONNECT

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



Before kids arrive, pray that your group would connect with the idea of joy despite what is going on in their lives that is really difficult. Lift up in prayer specific kids in your group that you know are having a hard time finding joy in this season. Pray that each one would see how God has a plan for each one of them—a good plan!

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Joyful, Joyful

Gabriel Appears to Mary
Luke 1:26-56

TODAY'S KEY QUESTION

What are your plans for Christmas?

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

You can have joy because
God has a plan for you.

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

Today in the town of David a
Savior has been born to you.
He is the Messiah, the Lord.
Luke 2:11, NIV

MONTHLY LIFE APP

Christmas—Celebrating Jesus,
God's greatest gift

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

JUST FOR FUN

WHAT YOU NEED: Paper, markers

WHAT YOU DO:

- All month long, we'll be having Christmas Chats!
- Provide paper and markers for anyone who wants to draw while the group is chatting.
- Today's Christmas Chat:
 - What is joy?
 - What brings you joy at Christmas?
 - What makes a Christmas joyful?
 - Are you having a joyful Christmas season so far?



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MADE TO MOVE

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



OPENING ACTIVITY

WHAT YOU NEED: Wide craft sticks, small jingle bells, timer or stopwatch

WHAT YOU DO:

- **Set** out a few bowls of small jingle bells and hand everyone a craft stick.
- **Ask** them to gather around a bowl—a couple kids per bowl—and put the craft stick in their mouth.
- **Tell** them that when you start the timer, they will have one minute to balance as many jingle bells on the craft stick as possible, while the craft stick remains in their mouth.
- If time allows, **repeat** the game another time or have the top three or four compete for the championship.

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WHAT YOU SAY:

"Last week we talked about an Old Testament promise from God that He would send a Savior. And today, the story picks up in the New Testament of the Bible, hundreds of years later. **[Transition] I can't wait to hear what's next. Let's go to Large Group to see what's next.**"

Lead your group to the Large Group area.



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CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO IMAGINE

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



VERSE TO TAKE WITH YOU

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Joy Memory Verse Cards" Activity Page, hole punch, ornament hooks, Bibles, markers, Christmas trees on stage

WHAT YOU DO:

- **Lay** all the verse cards out in front of your group.
- **Pass** out Bibles and **ask** for volunteers to look up and read the verses.
- **Ask: What's the reason for JOY according to this verse?**
 - Guide kids to work together to condense their answer to one word or phrase
 - Let one person write it on the card. (They can decorate the card, too, if they would like.)
- Then **hand** the card to another person to punch a hole, **add** the hook, and **hang** the card on the paper Christmas trees on stage.

Note: Below are the potential answer to the question, but there really is no right or wrong answer. The goal is to let kids work together as a group to think critically about what the verse means to them.

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Luke 2:10-11

What's the reason for JOY according to this verse? Our Savior

Psalms 33:21

What's the reason for JOY according to this verse? We can trust Him (Overflowing with hope, NIV)

Romans 15:13

What's the reason for JOY according to this verse? We're filled with hope

Matthew 1:21

What's the reason for JOY according to this verse? Jesus saved us (Jesus saved us from our sins, NIV)

John 3:16

What's the reason for JOY according to this verse? Eternal life

1 Samuel 2:1

What's the reason for JOY according to this verse? Strength (Deliverance, NIV)



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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

WHAT YOU NEED: No supplies needed

WHAT YOU DO:

Ask:

- What are your family's plans for Christmas?
- Do you like having set plans, loose plans, or no plans? (Ask kids to elaborate on their responses.)
- How was Jesus a part of God's plan all along?
- What does it mean to you to know that God sent Jesus for you? How does it make you feel?

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MADE TO REFLECT

an activity that creates space
for personal processing
and application



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

WHAT YOU NEED: "Prayer JOY Die" Activity Page

WHAT YOU DO:

- **Tell** your group that you're going to end your "JOY"-filled day by praying together with the J-O-Y acronym.
- **Show** them the die and **explain** that everyone will get a chance to roll, and they'll pray aloud (a one sentence prayer) based on what letter they land on.
Note: If anyone is uncomfortable praying aloud, encourage them to be brave and do it anyway, but don't force kids to pray aloud.
 - J- Jesus- thank God for Jesus, our Savior
 - O- others- pray for someone else in need or thank God for someone special in your life
 - Y- yourself- thank God for His plan for your life or something specific you want to praise Him for
- **Give** everyone a chance to roll and pray, then **close** by praying aloud over the whole group:

Dear God, thank You so much for the joy we have in You this Christmas season and always! Thank You for sending Jesus for us—we needed a Savior, and You gave us Jesus! I thank You for each kid sitting here today—they are all special to me and even more so to You. Thank You for how You made them each special and beautiful and smart and funny! We praise You for the plan You have for us and that we can trust You no matter what. It's in Jesus' name we pray, Amen!

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