



WEEK  
**TWO**  
DECEMBER 2021

LARGE GROUP  
**PRETEEN**

## TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

### TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

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

### TODAY'S KEY QUESTION

When has something worked out differently than you expected?

### TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Celebrate because  
God has a plan.

### 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

### GAME SUPPLIES

- **\*\*Digital**
  - 6 hula hoops
  - 2 beach balls
  - 2 Elf Hats
- Large container of mini-Candy Canes for prizes (just in case)

### STORY SUPPLIES

- Assorted costumes and props
  - Mary (robe and head covering)
  - oversized wedding ring
  - Angel (halo + wings, etc.)
  - newspaper

### 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

### LARGE GROUP

**35**  
MIN

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

##### - JINGLE JAM

- During each Christmas Eve service, we will have Jingle Jam for all Kinder-6th grade
- After each service, we will have a family experience outside with a giant snowglobe for pictures, fun stations with Candy canes, and more...
- **INVITE YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS**

##### - Invite Challenge

- Begin thinking about who you may invite to join you for Christmas Eve services this year
- Talk about it with your family and pray about who you can invite... then we will have invites for you soon to use to invite them

#### MONTHLY WORSHIP LINEUP:

- Week 1 – JOY to the World & Way Maker
- **Week 2 – This Christmas & There's Nothing That Our God Can't Do**
- Week 3 – JOY to the World & This is Living

### SMALL GROUP

**25**  
MIN



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<b>PRELUDE</b>	<b>SOCIAL</b>	<b>STORY</b>	<b>WORSHIP</b>	<b>GROUPS</b>	<b>HOME</b>
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25 MINUTES	10 MINUTES
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### MONTHLY LIFE APP

Christmas—Celebrating Jesus, God's greatest gift

### BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

## LARGE GROUP

ENGAGE KIDS' HEARTS THROUGH A DYNAMIC AND INTERACTIVE BIBLE STORY, WORSHIP, AND PRAYER EXPERIENCE IN A LARGE GROUP SETTING.

**AUDIO: PLAY HIGH-ENERGY MUSIC AS STUDENTS ENTER.**

**SLIDE: THEME**

**OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP**

Host enters . . .

## WORSHIP

**AUDIO: This Christmas**

**AUDIO: There's Nothing That Our God Can't Do**

**OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): COUNTDOWN (30- OR 60-SECOND VERSION)**

**OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME**

## WELCOME

Host has lots of energy as he or she welcomes everyone to [Name of Environment]. Host is relatable and inviting. Host can talk about something that happened culturally throughout the week like a big sports game, movie opening, a viral video on YouTube, etc. Host tells them how excited he or she is that they're there and briefly runs through what they can expect. This is especially helpful for first-time guests to make them feel like they know what's happening.

## OPENER

**HOST:** "Hey, everyone! So good to see you here today! I am excited to get started and play a fun game, and this one is an all play!"

### CHRISTMAS TRIVIA INTRO GAME (run through it fast)

**GAME: ELF GOLF** (explanation video on screen)

**\*\*\*Select two elves (one from guys, one from girls) to try and block the "golfing"**





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## COMMUNICATOR SCRIPT (STORY)

SLIDE: THEME BACKGROUND

*Communicator enters as Worship Leaders exit.*

### INTRODUCTION

**COMMUNICATOR:** “Well, hey, everyone! Good to see you all. December is already off to a great start, I’d say! This month is all about celebrating Jesus, God’s greatest gift. To get things started, here’s a question for you. Have you ever noticed that we often live by a series of unwritten expectations that we think very little about? Almost like unwritten rules. Let me give you an example. If you take the time to study hard for a test, you expect . . .”

*Pause for responses.*

“Right, to get a good grade. And if you DON’T get a good grade, you’re surprised because you EXPECT that studying equals a good grade. Let’s do another. If you try hard in practice, you expect . . .”

*Pause for responses.*

“To personally play well in the game or as a team win the game. Exactly! So if you find yourself sitting the bench, you would be surprised by that. Same thing if your team lost. Here’s another one. If you work hard doing summer jobs, you expect . . .”

*Pause for responses.*

“To earn some spending money. Yes. So if you do all this work, like cutting the grass, weeding gardens, or walking neighborhood dogs and then you don’t receive any payment, you might be disappointed. Okay, one more. If you are kind to other people, you expect . . .”

*Pause for responses.*

“Yes. You expect that they will be kind back to you. For sure. So if they treat you meanly or say unkind things about you, well, that might hurt your feelings.”

### TENSION:

**COMMUNICATOR:** “We have expectations for all sorts of things—expectations that may or may not go to plan. Our response to Christmas can have a lot to do with expectations as well. We imagine what might be under the tree on Christmas morning. We expect our friend to act a certain way when they open our gift. It’s great if life, and Christmas, meet our expectations. But what happens when things don’t go as we expect them to? Do we give up? Get angry? Pretend like it didn’t matter to us in the first place? We can respond all sorts of ways to unmet and changed expectations, but at the end of the day, does our response even matter? Those are some difficult questions, ones that people have been wrestling with for literally thousands of years.”

“When we have difficult questions, the best place to look for answers is the Bible. After all, the people who wrote the books of the Bible had personal experiences with God. On top of that, God inspired them to write down those



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experiences for others to understand more about what God wants for their lives. We can learn about our relationship with God from their relationships with God. Let's head to the Bible now to help us today."

## TRUTH

**COMMUNICATOR:** "As we said last week, all month long we are going to be in the Gospels of the New Testament. For today's story, I need the help of a young lady from the audience."

*Communicator chooses a volunteer to play Mary and introduces her to the rest of the kids. Communicator pulls out a robe and head covering and gives them to the volunteer to wear.*

"Let me introduce you all to Mary. Now what do you all know about Mary? Tell me something interesting."

*Pause for audience to respond with what they know.*

"Great job. So one thing you may not realize is that Mary was just an ordinary kid, probably just a bit older than you all in her teens. She lived in a small town called Nazareth. Because Nazareth was a small town, there's a good chance that everyone in town knew who she was."

"Now, there is something else you should know about Mary: she was engaged to be married! We're not exactly sure what engagement looked like back then, but here's a ring you can wear today to remind us what was happening with Mary."

*Communicator gives an oversized ring to the volunteer to wear on her ring finger.*

"As ordinary as Mary might have been to those she knew in this small town, God was about to do something extraordinary."

*Nothing happens. Communicator repeats that last line, louder.*

"(Clears throat) I said, as ordinary as Mary might have been to those she knew in this small town, God was about to do something extraordinary!"

*Host comes out dressed as an angel. Host is fixing their halo like they were still putting their costume on.*

**HOST:** "Sorry I'm late. Umm . . . lots of traffic in the sky today."

**COMMUNICATOR:** "Really?"

**HOST:** "Okay, I couldn't find my halo. (Cheerful, patting head) Got it now, though!"

**COMMUNICATOR:** "Alrighty then. Well, this is Gabriel, everyone. He probably didn't have a halo . . . or run into sky traffic . . . but . . . you get the idea. Let's pick up the story and see what happens next."

*Open the Bible to Luke 1:26b, 28 (NIRV) and read*

*'God sent the angel Gabriel . . .'*



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*Host starts flapping arms like a bird flying around the stage over to Mary.*

**COMMUNICATOR:** (To Host) "Okay you're supposed to be an angel . . . not an eagle. Pretty sure that angels don't fly like that."

**HOST:** "Who is the angel here, huh?"

**COMMUNICATOR:** "Okay, then. I stand corrected. Continuing.

*Open the Bible to Luke 1:26b, 28 (NIRV) and read*

*"God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee . . . The angel greeted her and said, "The Lord has blessed you in a special way. He is with you.""*

*Host greets Mary, repeating what was said.*

"It turns out that the angel was a messenger. The Lord had sent this angel to visit Mary and share some incredible news."

*Host hands Mary a newspaper.*

"Not that kind of news. Like a good report about what God was doing! But Mary was scared (*Communicator waits until Mary makes a scared face*). She didn't know why the angel was appearing or what message he had for her."

*Open the Bible to 1:30-32a (NIRV) and read while Host repeats after each line.*

*"But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary. God is very pleased with you. You will become pregnant and give birth to a son. You must call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High God.""*

"What an announcement! Not only would Mary have a Baby, but that Baby would be the long-awaited Messiah, the promised Savior, Jesus!"

"Now, this was confusing to Mary because she wasn't married yet. But God reassured Mary that everything would be okay. God would be with her through the whole process. Now, think about how you respond when what you expected is not how the situation turns out. How do you think Mary responded? Fear? Anger? Sadness? She planned on her life being very different at this point. Now, everything was about to change."

*Pause for responses from audience.*

"Well, actually, we have Mary's response right here (pointing to the Bible)!"

*Open the Bible to Luke 1:38 (NIRV) and read.*

*"I serve the Lord," Mary answered. "May it happen to me just as you said it would." Then the angel left her."*

**HOST:** "Well, that's my cue!"





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*Host flaps arms around and away like a bird.*

**COMMUNICATOR:** “Still not quite sure we fully understand angels. Anyway, later on, we read this beautiful song that Mary sang about everything that God was doing. *(To volunteer)* You ready to sing? *(beat)* Just kidding, you don’t have to sing, but can you repeat this after me? Great. This is part of Mary’s song.”

*Open the Bible to Luke 1:46-48 (NirV) and read while volunteer repeats after each line.*

*“My soul gives glory to the Lord. My spirit delights in God my Savior. He has taken note of me even *(break for volunteer to repeat)* though I am not considered important.”*

“Awesome. Let’s give thanks to our volunteer for helping us out!”

*Volunteer can be seated.*

## APPLICATION

**COMMUNICATOR:** “I imagine when Mary was a young girl dreaming about how her life would go, she probably didn’t imagine this. An angel? A baby? The very Son of God coming into the world through her? How could this be? And what would this mean for Mary’s life?”

“Yet for Mary, she was amazed by the fact that God would even want to use her. She had a ‘why me’ moment. ‘Why me? Who am I that God would use me?’ I’m sure she wondered why God would want to use an ordinary girl from a small town to do something so extraordinary. Maybe she thought she was too young, too shy, too small, too whatever. And yet, God used her in a big way—maybe the biggest way!”

“There are certainly times when we have big expectations about how life should go and maybe even about what God should do in our life. And sometimes life takes unexpected turns, for sure. But we can still trust and even celebrate that God has a plan! God knows what’s happening for you. Think about it. As you respond to the what happens in your life, maybe God is up to something big and is planning for you play a part!”

“Now there’s another piece to this, too. God also knows what’s happening for the world. What God was doing through Mary was also part of the plan for the world. The plan for a Rescuer. The plan for a Savior. But this plan would cost Mary—it would cost her own plans. And yet, God would use her in a powerful way to play a role in the rescue of the whole world.”

“Sometimes what God wants to do in us and through us can be uncomfortable. Sometimes it can be inconvenient. But if God is in it, we can trust and even celebrate that plan!”

## LANDING

**COMMUNICATOR:** “Today, as you go to groups, think about this question:”

### SLIDE: KEY QUESTION SLIDE

**“When has something worked out differently than you expected?”** Think about those moments and how you responded. Consider the ways God has worked in your life, your family, and your friends. How did what was



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different maybe even turn out better? If you're not sure how you'd answer those questions, that's ok, too. You'll talk more about all of this and more during Small Group. Before you head out, though, let's pray and thank God for using Mary to be part of sending Jesus to rescue the world. Let's ask God for help in understanding our own circumstances. Let's pray."

*Communicator leads group in a prayer related to what they just heard. After prayer, Communicator dismisses kids to Small Group.*

*NOTE: If your church is partnering with Orange and Compassion International in supporting The Giving Tree, we suggest using the time before dismissal to promote the initiative to your kids. (Please see the "Getting Ready" section for more information about this partnership.) Consider showing one of the available promo videos here to get your kids excited about providing life-changing gifts for critically vulnerable kids and families all around the world. Throughout the month, share how much money you've raised and how that money can help.*

**OPTIONAL VIDEO: PROMO FOR THE GIVING TREE**

**AUDIO: PLAY HIGH-ENERGY MUSIC AS STUDENTS EXIT.**

**SLIDE: LIGHT SHOW THEME**

**OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP**

