



## TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

### TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

**Because of Christmas Day**  
Jesus Is Born/Shepherds Visit  
Luke 2:1-20

### TODAY'S KEY QUESTION

How are you celebrating  
Christmas this year?

### TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Celebrate because  
God sent a Savior.

### 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

- LOTS of snowballs
- Large container of mini-Candy Canes for prizes (just in case)

### STORY SUPPLIES

- Video teaching

### 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

#### SOCIAL: Providing time for fun interaction

Just for Fun  
Opening Activity

### 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

- This is the last week to be 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



WEEK  
**THREE**  
DECEMBER 2021

LARGE GROUP  
**PRETEEN**

PRELUDE

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HOME

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: JOY to the World**

**AUDIO: This is Living**

## 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:** "What's going on, everyone! Merry Christmas! Can you believe it's the week of Christmas already?! We have such a good day in store for you. Let's start with a fun game of **BACK AND FORTH - Christmas Edition.**"

You guys will be going HEAD TO HEAD (guys vs. gals) against one another in a game called BACK AND FORTH - Christmas Edition.

Explanation on screen

Get 2 people for every 2-3 rounds (move through them fast)

## GAME: Super Snowball Fight

Instructions on video (but instead of the WHOLE ROOM participating, just have it be 5-10 kids/leaders at a time for each team); play 3-4 rounds



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## COMMUNICATOR SCRIPT (STORY)

SLIDE: THEME BACKGROUND

*Communicator enters as Worship Leaders exit.*

### INTRODUCTION

**COMMUNICATOR:** “Hey, friends! Glad to see you all here today. Can you believe that it is Christmas week already?! It’s the most wonderful time of the year—hey, I should write a song about that—(beat) anyway! You know what I want to hear? I want to hear from some of you. What are some of the ways that your family celebrates this time of year? In other words, what are some of your Christmas traditions? For instance . . .”

*Note: The following is an example of a quick personal Christmas tradition. You can share your own or make this a hypothetical example.*

“Growing up our extended family would gather every Christmas Eve at my grandparents’ house. My grandmother had knitted a stocking for every single one of us! She’d fill these with all sorts of fun little gifts and snacks. We’d eat dinner together. Then after dinner, we’d get to open our stocking presents as a teaser for Christmas morning. Those times were the best!”

“That’s about me, but what about you? Let’s hear a few of your Christmas traditions!”

*Call on kids to share examples.*

“Nice! Those are great! You know, it’s crazy to think how we have so many different ways that we can celebrate Christmas!”

### TENSION

**COMMUNICATOR:** “We know we celebrate, but have you ever wondered WHY we make such a big deal about Christmas? The presents and traditions. All the church services. The stores decorated in November. The TV specials and movies. The countless books people have written. People have been making a big deal about Christmas for a really long time. But I mean, it happens every year, right? Why go through it all EVERY single year? And why does each year seem to have bigger and bigger moments of celebration? I mean presents are great and all, but why go through all the fuss? We even know that Jesus is important and the reason for the season, but do we really need all the celebration?”

“You know, even though we might have an idea of how to answer these questions, it’s important to take time and remember why something we celebrate is still important to celebrate. Christmas is one of those times. It’s too easy to take our traditions for granted and just go through the motions without really thinking about why those traditions matter. Let’s take a moment today to remember and celebrate.”

### TRUTH

**COMMUNICATOR:** “Today we head into the VERY heart of the Christmas story to remind us WHY we celebrate every year. Now, I’m guessing this is a pretty familiar story to most of you, so I’ve asked [Host’s name] to come on out here and help me out.”



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*Host enters.*

**HOST:** "How's it going, everybody! How can I help?"

**COMMUNICATOR:** "Well, I was thinking for the telling of the Christmas story you could help me with the visuals and sound effects—you know, a real 'sights and sounds' production."

**HOST:** "Oh, I know EXACTLY what you are talking about! I'll be right back!"

**COMMUNICATOR:** "Why do I have a feeling I have just released a monster? Okay, well, let's get started reading the story until Host's name comes back."

*Open the Bible to Luke 2:1, 3-4 (NirV) and read.*

"In those days, Caesar Augustus made a law. It required that a list be made of everyone in the whole Roman world. . . . Everyone went to their own town to be listed . . . So Joseph went also. He went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea. That is where Bethlehem, the town of David, was."

*Host enters with a box under their arm, while also clapping two coconut halves together like a horse. Communicator stops and stares.*

**COMMUNICATOR:** "Ummm . . . what are you doing?"

**HOST:** "I'm Joseph, riding my horse to Bethlehem!"

**COMMUNICATOR:** "Okay, then. Not quite sure there was a horse . . . but I guess I like your creativity. Let's continue. So we have Joseph. His story starts out with a bit of a challenge. Caesar—the king of the entire Roman empire—decided that he wanted to take a census. In other words, he wanted to count all the people in his empire so that he knew (*and the world knew!*) just how big and powerful of a kingdom he had and how much he could tax them."

*Host starts dramatically counting all of the kids in the room until the Communicator stops and watches.*

"But to do so he commanded every person to return to their hometown to be counted there. That may not seem like a big deal—but Joseph and his pregnant wife Mary lived in Nazareth."

*Host takes a pillow out of the box and begins to stuff it under their shirt. Communicator stops them.*

"Joseph's family was from Bethlehem, and now they had to travel there from Nazareth. They'd have to travel almost 70 miles to get there!"

*Host takes out a tape measure from their box and begins to stretch it as far as it will go. Walks back and forth. Wipes brow.*



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"After a long and difficult journey, Mary and Joseph arrived in Bethlehem. Let's read."

*Open the Bible to Luke 2:6-7 (NirV) and read.*

"While Joseph and Mary were there, the time came for the child to be born."

*Host takes out a clock and begins ticking very loudly. Communicator acknowledges before moving on.*

"She gave birth to her first baby. It was a boy."

*Communicator throws blue confetti and balloons out of box.*

"She wrapped him in large strips of cloth. Then she placed him in a manger—an animal food trough!— That's because there was no guest room where they could stay."

"This is the moment Jesus was born. This is how God sent His one and only Son into the world to save us. Think about that."

"Now Mary and Joseph were not alone for long. You see . . ."

*Open the Bible to Luke 2:8-9 (NirV) and read.*

"There were shepherds living out in the fields nearby. It was night . . ."

*Host takes a sheet out and throws it over the Communicator's head.*

**COMMUNICATOR:** "What are you doing?"

**HOST:** "You said it was night—"

**COMMUNICATOR:** *(Removing sheet slowly)* "Okay. Thank you. So where was I? Oh yes."

*Open the Bible to Luke 2:8-9 (NirV) and read.*

"There were shepherds living out in the fields nearby. It was night, and they were taking care of their sheep. An angel of the Lord appeared to them. And the glory of the Lord shone around them . . ."

*Host takes out a flashlight and dramatically shines it around the Communicator. Communicator responds.*

"They were terrified."

**HOST:** "You mean, kind of like they thought they had seen a . . . ghost?"



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**COMMUNICATOR:** "Yeah, I guess you could say that . . ."

*Host throws the sheet over the Communicator's head again. Communicator just stands there.*

**COMMUNICATOR:** "I really walked right into that one, didn't I? *(Removes sheet again)* Anyway, so, it was a night just like any other night, and these shepherds had traveled with their flocks and were out in the fields near Bethlehem. They did this all the time! What didn't happen all of the time? Angels appearing in the middle of the sky and the glory of the Lord shining all around them! They were . . . *(wait for response)* TERRIFIED!"

Communicator holds up hand to block the sheet.

"Now, there is something you should probably know about shepherds. They weren't very well respected. They were all dirty from being out in the fields . . ."

*Host dabs a bit of dirt or potting soil on the Communicator's forehead.*

**COMMUNICATOR:** "I sure hope that's not what I think it is . . . let's keep going."

*Open the Bible to Luke 2:10-11 (NIRV) and read.*

*"But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news. It will bring great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you. He is the Messiah, the Lord.'"*

"This was not just any baby, but the angels declared that this child was the long-awaited Messiah. The Savior who would come to save God's people. Surely these shepherds along with everyone else had waited a long time. Some had given up hope. But the angels declared, 'The Savior is here!'"

*Open the Bible to Luke 2:16 (NIRV) and read.*

*"So they hurried off . . ."*

*Host starts rapidly fanning air into the Communicator's face.*

*(To Host) What are you doing?!"*

**HOST:** "You said they 'hurried off.' I'm providing the wind like you're moving really fast!"

**COMMUNICATOR:** "The things I do for the kids. Okay then. Continuing."

*Open the Bible to Luke 2:16 (NIRV) and read.*

*"So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph and the baby. The baby was lying in the manger."*

"Think about it—these shepherds were the first visitors to see the new baby. Imagine what that must have been like. And even more amazing was the fact that they couldn't stop talking about it. Check out the next verses in the story."





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*Open the Bible to Luke 2:17-18 (NirV) and read.*

*“After the shepherds had seen him, they told everyone. They reported what the angel had said about this child. All who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.”*

*Host pulls out a megaphone and begins shouting ‘Jesus the Savior is born in Bethlehem! Did you hear? The Messiah has come!’*

*“Do you see what just happened?! The angels told the shepherds the good news about Jesus and it changed their lives. They were never the same! But it didn’t stop there! They told EVERYONE what had happened, and now THOSE people were amazed and celebrated the good news also!”*

*“Hey, would you give [Host’s name] a hand! (To Host) You really helped me tell that story.”*

*Host exits.*

## APPLICATION

**COMMUNICATOR:** “Now, we tried to have a little fun with that, and [Host’s name] did an awesome job. But don’t miss this . . . what you just heard . . . THIS was how Jesus entered the world! This was how God chose to send Jesus to us to save us. It may not have been what was expected. It may not have been what most people were looking for. And yet, God did the most amazing thing. God gave us Jesus!”

*“We don’t celebrate this first Christmas because every detail was perfect or because the most perfect people showed up. We celebrate this first Christmas because God gave us Jesus. And the whole moment gives us hope and reminds us that God continues to do amazing things in this world and in our lives.”*

## LANDING

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

### SLIDE: KEY QUESTION SLIDE

**“How are you celebrating Christmas this year?”** Sure, your answer may include traditions and decorations. And those are great. But in the middle of the presents and the food, how can you remember to take time and celebrate Jesus? How can you celebrate Him this year? You’ll get a chance to chat more about all of this in Small Group and come up with some great ideas. Before you head out, let’s pray and thank God for sending Jesus to save us! 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.*