

TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
Jesus Is Promised
Isaiah 9:6-7

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

God always has a plan.

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 VIRTUE

Christmas—Celebrating Jesus,
God's greatest gift

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

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

Early Arriver
Opening Activity

LARGE GROUP

35
MIN

STORY: Communicating God's truth in engaging ways **WORSHIP: Inviting people to respond to God**

Welcome/Opener
Worship ("Go Tell It" and "Greatest Gift (Remix)")
Bible Story
Bottom Line
Prayer
Closer

SMALL GROUP

25
MIN

GROUPS: Creating a safe place to connect

Bible Story Review: What's in a Name? (*k-1st grade*),
Waiting Game (*2nd-3rd grade*)
Application Activity: Drawing a Plan (*k-1st grade*), Stable
Structure (*2nd-3rd grade*)
Memory Verse Activity: Christmas Lights Verse (*k-1st grade*),
Plan Bookmark (*2nd-3rd grade*)
Prayer Activity: Pray and Dismiss

HOME: Prompting action beyond the experience

Parent Cue Card (print or email)
Devotionals for Kids
Parent Cue App

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

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Jesus Is Promised
Isaiah 9:6-7

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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

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God's greatest gift**

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

Bible Versus

Isaiah 6:8

Isaiah 9:2

Isaiah 9:6

Isaiah 9:7

Host Supplies

- Table
- Six oven mitts
- Three large boxes of candy canes, wrapped as a gift, then placed inside another gift-wrapped box and then placed inside another gift-wrapped box—so when you open the first box, you find another box, and when you open that one, you find the candy canes inside

Story Supplies

- Host
- Outfit for Story teller like sport coat, glasses - to look like a talk show host
- Biblical robe
- Fake gray beard
- Over-sized, rolled-up scroll. If possible add verses to scroll
- Feather pen
- Printed script for the Host and Story teller on cue cards
- 2 Chairs and a table set up like a talking session (interview)
- Any other decore like a lamp or potted fake flower to make the scene



PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

10 MINUTES

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 KIDS ENTER.

SLIDE: THEME

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP

Host enters. Introduces the worship team

Worship Leaders enter as Host exits.

Host enters as Worship Leaders exit.

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

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME

OPENER

HOST: "Hey, everybody! I'm so excited because it's December, and that means Christmas is right around the corner. In fact, that's what we're talking about all month: Christmas!"

SLIDE: VIRTUE

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME TRANSITION TO VIRTUE

"Christmas is about celebrating Jesus, God's greatest gift."

SLIDE: THEME

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): VIRTUE TRANSITION TO THEME

"I just love Christmas. Don't you? *(Pause for response.)* Christmas is the best because there's fun music, lots of decorations, candy canes, hot cocoa, and . . . PRESENTS!"

Hold up one of the wrapped gifts.

"It's pretty cool—the reason we give gifts today is because we remember how God gave us the greatest gift EVER by sending Jesus to be our Savior."

"I thought today we could play a fun game with some gifts. How does that sound? Let me get three Small Group Leaders to join me on stage for a little game we like to call 'Open That Present!'"

Choose three leaders to join you on stage. Have them stand behind a table, facing the audience. Place a present in front of each of them, but don't give them the oven mitts yet.



PRELUDE SOCIAL STORY WORSHIP GROUPS HOME

(to the leaders) "This game is so simple. It's easy-peasy, lemon-squeezy! All you have to do is open the present. The first person to get their gift open and hold up what's inside, wins a prize for their small group.

"Are you ready? *(Pause.)* Great! Let's count it down. Three . . . two . . . one . . . WAIT! I totally forgot something. So sorry, everyone. *(to leaders)* I forgot to tell you that you need to wear these!

Give each leader two oven mitts to put on.

"Okay, NOW, let's count it down. Three . . . two . . . one . . . go!

AUDIO: FUN CHRISTMAS MUSIC

Make funny commentary as the leaders try to open the gifts. Once they get through the first box, make a big deal about how there's another box. In the end, celebrate the winner, but let all three leaders take the gifts with them.

"That was amazing! Way to go, leaders! *(to audience)* Let's give them a hand as they head back to their seats.

Leaders go back to their seats.

"Now let's get ready to sing with our worship team. Let's thank God for sending Jesus for us!"

Worship Leaders enter as Host exits.



PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

BIBLE STORY

SLIDE: THEME BACKGROUND

Storyteller enters as Worship Leaders exit.

SETTING UP THE STORY

STORYTELLER: "Hi, everyone! I'm so glad to be here with you as we celebrate Jesus—God's greatest gift to us. Did you know that God ALWAYS had a plan to send Jesus to the world?"

If you're using a Bible timeline on your wall, you can reference it here as you recap.

"If we go back to the very beginning, we remember how God made an amazing world. God made people: Adam and Eve. But when Adam and Eve turned away from God, the world was broken. Still, God had a plan to bless the whole world through Abraham's family, the Israelites.

"Unfortunately, over and over again, the people turned away from God. After King David's son Solomon was king, the kingdom of Israel was split into two nations. God spoke through people called prophets to encourage the people to turn their hearts back to God. God also spoke through these prophets to tell people that one day, God would send a Rescuer. One of these prophets was a man named Isaiah.

"In fact, you'll never believe this, but I think the prophet Isaiah is here to join us today. *(calling backstage)* Isaiah! Isaiah, can you come out here?"

Host enters as Isaiah, wearing a robe and gray beard, holding an oversized, rolled-up scroll and a feather pen.

THE PROPHET ISAIAH

STORYTELLER: "So, [Host's name]—I mean, Isaiah . . . we're so glad to have you here with us today."

HOST (AS ISAIAH): "Oh, well, hello there. I'm happy to be here with you."

STORYTELLER: "So Isaiah, you lived more than 700 years before Jesus was born. Is that right?"

HOST (AS ISAIAH): *(long pause as if you're going to say a lot but don't)* "Yes."

STORYTELLER: "But even though you lived so long before Jesus came, you knew that God WOULD send the Savior. Is that right?"

HOST (AS ISAIAH): *(brightly)* "Yes!"

STORYTELLER: "Okay, now, tell me if I have this right. You saw a vision from God."

HOST (AS ISAIAH): "I did! In this vision, I heard God's voice, 'Who will I send?' And I was like, *(raise your hand)* 'Here I am. Send me!'" *(Isaiah 6:8, NIV)*



PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

STORYTELLER: "Isaiah, that's incredible! You were so willing to give your life to follow God and do what God wanted you to do. (Pause.) So you were ready to speak God's words to the people—and we can even read your words today."

HOST (AS ISAIAH): *(Hold up the scroll and feather pen.)* "Yes. Today you can find them in the BOOK of Isaiah—right there in what you call the Old Testament of the Bible!"

STORYTELLER: "Amazing! So, you were living during a time when the northern kingdom of Judah had been attacked and conquered by the Assyrians. With the Assyrians closing in, Isaiah, you knew it was only a matter of time until they took over the southern kingdom of Israel, too. That must have been a very difficult time for you."

HOST (AS ISAIAH): *(long pause as if you're going to say a lot but don't)* "Yes."

THE RESCUER

STORYTELLER: "Okay, so Isaiah, you served during this time as an adviser to the king. But many of the messages you shared also spoke about a time far in the future—a time when God would send someone to the rescue. And this Rescuer wasn't just someone who would save the Israelites from their enemies. This Rescuer was coming to save ALL people, forever!"

"Isaiah, would you mind reading some of the words you wrote about the Savior? Here, you can read them right here from the Bible."

Hand the Bible to Isaiah.

HOST (AS ISAIAH): "Why, yes, of course!"

Host (Isaiah) clears his/her throat then reads from Isaiah 9:2 (NirV)—slowly and deliberately.

*"The people who are now living in darkness
will see a great light.*

They are now living in a very dark land.

But a light will shine on them."

STORYTELLER: "Wow! So, Isaiah, when you said, 'a light will shine on them,' you were talking about the Savior. And you went on to explain that the Savior would come in the most unusual, unexpected way—as a baby!"

HOST (AS ISAIAH): "Yes, that is true!"

Host (Isaiah) opens the Bible to Isaiah 9:6a (NirV) and reads—slowly and deliberately.

"A child will be born to us.

A son will be given to us.

He will rule over us."

WONDERFUL ADVISER . . .

STORYTELLER: "Isaiah, I have to say, it's just amazing to think that you said all this about Jesus, HUNDREDS of years before He was born! Could you read us the next part that says what the Savior would be like?"



PRELUDE SOCIAL STORY WORSHIP GROUPS HOME

25 MINUTES

HOST (AS ISAIAH): "I'd love to.

Host (Isaiah) opens the Bible to Isaiah 9:6b (NirV) and reads—slowly and deliberately.

*"He will be called
Wonderful Adviser and Mighty God.
He will also be called Father Who Lives Forever
and Prince Who Brings Peace."*

STORYTELLER: "Wow, that is so cool! You said the Rescuer would be our Wonderful Adviser. Jesus directed His disciples, and He can direct us when we we're not sure what to do.

"You said that the Rescuer is our Mighty God. Well, Jesus is the Son of God. He's stronger and more powerful than any other king!

"The Rescuer would be called 'Father Who Lives Forever.' We know that Jesus is alive today! He will never leave us. He is always, ALWAYS with us.

"And you said that the Rescuer would be called 'Prince Who Brings Peace.' Jesus did that, too! When Jesus laid down His life for us—and rose again—He made peace. He made a way to make things right between people and God.

(to audience) "You see, Jesus was God's Promised Rescuer! And when we believe in Jesus and follow Him, we can have a relationship with God that lasts forever. Because of Jesus, everything that is broken will be made whole.

(to Host) "Isaiah, could you please read us the next part before you go? I just love to hear the words God shared through you about Jesus!"

HOST (AS ISAIAH): "Of course!

Host (Isaiah) opens the Bible to Isaiah 9:7 (NirV) and reads—slowly and deliberately.

*"There will be no limit to how great his authority is.
The peace he brings will never end. . . .
His rule will be based on what is fair and right.
It will last forever.
The Lord's great love will make sure that happens.
He rules over all."*

STORYTELLER: "Isaiah, thank you so much for joining us today. And thank you for writing down these amazing words that set the stage for our Savior, our Rescuer, Jesus. *(to audience)* Let's give Isaiah a hand as he heads out!"

Host waves and exits.

WRAPPING UP THE STORY

STORYTELLER: "We can see that God had a plan to rescue the Israelites, all the way from the very beginning. God was making a way, not just for the Jewish people, but for ALL of us, to be saved. And it would all depend on a tiny baby.



25 MINUTES

“God’s plan was to send Jesus—the greatest gift the world has ever known! And God began by sharing words through prophets like Isaiah, who spoke of the Savior who was to come.

“It’s so good to know that God has always had a plan! In fact, that’s what we need to remember today.

SLIDE: BOTTOM LINE

“God always has a plan.

“Let’s pray and thank God for that now.”

SLIDE: THEME BACKGROUND

PRAY

STORYTELLER: “Dear God, thank You for speaking these words of hope through the prophet Isaiah. Thank You for the way You shared with the world that You were sending a Savior to rescue us! Please help us remember that You always have a plan. Remind us of that when our lives don’t seem to make sense or when things happen that we don’t expect. You had a plan to send Jesus, and You have a plan for our lives today. We are so thankful! We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.”



25 MINUTES

CLOSER

Host enters as Storyteller exits.

HOST: “Wow! Usually at Christmas time, we think about how Jesus was born in Bethlehem, but we don’t always think about everything that led up to that moment.

“The truth is, God had a plan to save not just the Israelites, but all of us. That’s what God promised through the words of the prophet Isaiah.

SLIDE: GOD’S BIG STORY TIMELINE
SLIDE: WEEK 1 TIMELINE IMAGE

If you’re making a timeline of printed images on your wall, take this moment to place today’s timeline image on the clothesline.

“Hundreds of years before Jesus came, Isaiah spoke about the Savior who was to come. God was working through the words of Isaiah—and when the time was right, God’s promise came true! God sent Jesus to rescue us.

“God is always at work, even when we can’t see it.

SLIDE: BOTTOM LINE

“God always has a plan.

“So when things don’t make sense and you’re not sure what to do, never forget that God has a plan. Remember that **[Basic Truth] you can trust God no matter what.** And remember that Jesus is always with you! He is your Wonderful Adviser and your Mighty God. He is the Father Who Lives Forever and the Prince of Peace.

“Our memory verse for this month is about the real meaning of Christmas. This is why we celebrate: because God sent Jesus, the Savior, to us. This is what the angel said to the shepherds to announce the birth of Jesus.

SLIDE: 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)”

“I’ve had so much fun with you today as we’ve looked at God’s plan to send Jesus. You can talk about that some more with your friends in Small Group. I’ll see you later!”

Dismiss kids to their small groups.

AUDIO: PLAY HIGH-ENERGY CHRISTMAS MUSIC AS THE KIDS EXIT.
SLIDE: THEME
OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP