

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, take a few moments to pray for them. Thank God for putting a plan into action to make a way for us to have a relationship with God now and forever. Thank God for being a God who can do anything, yet still chose to send a Savior in such a humble and unexpected way.

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

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

1. EARLY ARRIVER

WHAT YOU NEED: Offering container

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

God always has a plan.

WHAT YOU DO:

- Welcome kids by name as they arrive.
- Invite kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
- Tell kids that you're going to play a game of "Christmas This or That?"
- Kids will take turns asking the group a question in the form of "This or That?"
- Let kids have a few moments to think of a question.
- When ready, invite the kids to take turns asking their questions.
- If the kids are stumped, here are some suggestions:
 - Red or green?
 - Peppermint candy canes or fruit flavored?
 - Colored lights or white lights?
 - "Jingle Bells" or "Slight Night"?
 - Christmas travel or stay home?
 - White Christmas or no snow? (Or if in the southern hemisphere, beach or pool?)
 - Big gifts or a few small gifts?
 - Tree up in November or not until December?
 - Wrapped gifts or gifts in bags?
 - Turkey or ham?
 - Sweet potatoes or regular potatoes?

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.

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO CREATE

an activity that explores ideas through the process of drawing, building, designing, and problem-solving



3. PLAN BOOKMARKS

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Bookmark" Activity Page, Bibles, markers, hole punch, yarn; *Optional decorating supplies*

WHAT YOU DO:

- Make sure each kid has a Bible.
- Look up Luke 2:11, this month's memory verse, using the navigation tips below.

***Finding verses with 2nd and 3rd graders:** Guide kids to open their Bibles and find the table of contents in the front. Hold up a Bible opened to the table of contents to show the kids what the page looks like. When the kids find the table of contents, lead them to find "Luke" in the list under "New Testament." When the kids find Luke, lead them to look at the page number beside the word. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find Luke. Help the kids find the page. When they find Luke, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find chapter 2. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find verse 11 in chapter 2.*

- Read the verse out loud as a group.
- Give each kid a bookmark and a pencil.
- Instruct the kids to fill in the missing words in the verse by unscrambling the letters under each blank line.
- Give each kid a piece of yarn.
- Demonstrate how to loop the yarn through the hole and tie a knot.
- Invite kids to decorate their bookmarks using markers and optional decorating supplies.

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WHAT YOU SAY:

"Seven hundred years before Jesus was born, Isaiah wrote that a Savior would come . . . as a baby. Then seven hundred years later, Luke, the author of our memory verse, told us that it really happened! God keeps promises, so we can trust that God's plan is perfect.

"Place your bookmark in a special place in your Bible or a special book you're reading or anywhere to remind you that **God always has a plan.**"

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO REFLECT

an activity that creates space for personal processing and application



4. PRAY AND DISMISS
[PRAY TO GOD | PRAYER ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: Bookmarks from “Plan Bookmarks” activity and pencils

WHAT YOU DO:

- Make sure each kid has their bookmark and give them a pencil.
- Invite the kids to form a circle and sit down.
- Direct the kids to turn their bookmark over to the blank side.
- Prompt the kids to write anything that’s currently worrying them or something that’s difficult and they need help trusting God with.
- Close your group time in prayer.

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WHAT YOU SAY:

“We can trust God, no matter what. God is there for us and loves us so much that He sent us Jesus. Let’s pray.

“Dear God, thank You for reminding us today that You have a perfect plan. Help us remember that You sent Jesus to make a way for us to have a relationship with You. And because we can have a relationship with You, we can trust You with the plan You have for our lives. Please help us with the things we wrote. Help us trust You and Your plan to make a way to have a relationship with us and remind us that You are always there for us, no matter what. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.”

As adults arrive to pick up, ask the kids to show them the bookmarks and share how the verse is a reminder that God has a plan for their lives and always keeps His promise to fulfill that plan.

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MADE TO PLAY

an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and/or working as a group



*** 1. WHAT'S IN A NAME?**

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

WHAT YOU NEED: "What's in a Name" Activity Page and wrapped box(es) with a removable lid(s)

WHAT YOU DO:

- Direct the kids to sit in a circle.
 - If you have more than ten kids, direct the kids to sit in two separate circles and provide two gift boxes.
- Show the kids the wrapped gift box.
- Tell kids that inside the gift are some of the names for Jesus that they learned in the Bible story today.
- Direct the kids to pass the gift around the circle until you call out, "HIS NAME SHALL BE CALLED . . ." then the kid holding the box opens it.
- Instruct that kid removes a piece of paper and reads the name for Jesus out loud so everyone can hear.
 - Be sure to help the younger ones who may need assistance with reading.
 - Give them the chance to sound it out, and if they still struggle, help them read it to the rest of the group.
- Once the paper has been read, direct the kid to hold onto their paper, put the lid back on the gift, and start passing it around the circle again.
- Continue until every kid has had a turn and all of the names for Jesus have been read out loud.
- Review the names of Jesus by instructing the kids to go around in the circle and read the name they chose again.
- Once all ten names have been read out loud, ask kids if any of the names sounded funny or strange.
 - Allow the kids time to respond to this. Some of them may have never heard "Messiah" before, and we want to keep this light-hearted so they can ask questions. Below are some examples on how to explain some of the names if there are questions.
 - Messiah means "the anointed or chosen one." Kings would be anointed with oil when they had a special task to do and Jesus definitely had a special task. God chose Him to come to Earth and live a perfect life, die for our sins, then defeat death and rise again.
 - Savior means "one who saves." Jesus saved us from our sins when He died on the cross and rose again three days later. We can have a relationship with God because Jesus saved us.
 - Wonderful Adviser means "Jesus wants to help us and give us advice when we aren't sure what to do." The Bible holds so much wisdom from Jesus, and we can read the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John to read some of what Jesus said when He shared His wisdom.
- Even if kids don't have questions, try to explain the names as best you can.
- Set the papers aside to use during prayer time.

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