

## TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

### TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

**The Greatest Gift**  
Jesus Is Born  
Luke 2:1-7

### TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Jesus is the greatest gift.

### 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 ("Joy to the World (Glory to the King)" and "Greatest Gift (Remix)")  
Bible Story  
Bottom Line  
Prayer  
Closer

### SMALL GROUP

**25**  
MIN

#### **GROUPS: Creating a safe place to connect**

**Bible Story Review:** Popsicle Stick Manger Scene (*k-1st grade*), The Unexpected (*2nd-3rd grade*)  
**Application Activity:** Which Is Greater? (*k-1st grade*), Nativity (*2nd-3rd grade*)  
**Memory Verse Activity:** Block Verse (*k-1st grade*), Gift Relay (*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

25 MINUTES      10 MINUTES

**TODAY'S BIBLE STORY**

**The Greatest Gift**  
Jesus Is Born  
Luke 2:1-7

**TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE**

Jesus is the greatest gift.

**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, NlrV

**MONTHLY VIRTUE**

Christmas—Celebrating Jesus,  
God's greatest gift

**BASIC TRUTH**

I can trust God no matter what.

Luke 1:31-32 (NIrV)

**HOST SUPPLIES**

- Bin for each small group, containing:
  - Roll of wrapping paper
  - Tape
  - Kid-friendly safety scissors
  - Other wrapping accessories like ribbons, bows, and gift tags
- Large trash can
- Week 3 Timeline Image printed on cardstock from the LG Assets PDF
- Clothesline and clothespins for the timeline in your room

**STORY SUPPLIES**

- Table
- Five boxes, wrapped as Christmas gifts, with props inside:
  - Box #1—bag of Caesar salad that prominently has the word "Caesar" on it
  - Box #2—large modern road map of Israel or any road map with a handmade "ISRAEL" sticker on the front
  - Box #3—plush sheep
  - Box #4—baby doll
  - Box #5—swaddle blanket

**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.*

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

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

**OPENER**

**HOST:** "Hello, friends! It's great to see you. Christmas Day is getting SO CLOSE. I just can't wait!

“Christmas is such a special time of year because we get to celebrate the very best gift ever!

**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**

“There are so many reasons to love Christmas because there are so many fun things we get to do this time of year. I just love riding around to look at Christmas lights. I think it’s fun to see how many candy cane decorations I can count. Also, I LOVE wrapping presents—almost as much as I love to open them. Do you like to wrap presents? (Pause for response.) Well, if you said, ‘Yes,’ you’re in luck. If you said, ‘No,’ I think today might just change your mind. And if you’ve never wrapped a present before . . . well, this will be a fun way to start!

“This game is called ‘That’s a Wrap.’ And you get to work with your small group to wrap your leader like a present!

“First, you’ll need your wrapping supplies.

*Pass out a bin full of wrapping supplies to each group.*

“When I say ‘Go,’ you’ll have two minutes to work together as a team to make your leader look like an irresistible Christmas present! At the end of two minutes, I’ll take a look at the results and pick a winning team. Are you ready? (Pause for response.) Let’s get this party started. Three, two, one, GO!

**AUDIO: FUN CHRISTMAS MUSIC**

**OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): COUNTDOWN (5-MINUTE VERSION, CUED TO THE 2:00 MARK)**

*Provide funny commentary during the game. Give updates to let everyone know how much time is left.*

*When time is up, pick the best-looking “present” and congratulate the winning team. Then have ALL the leaders do a dance-off to the Christmas music to break out of their Christmas wrapping!*

**AUDIO: FUN CHRISTMAS MUSIC (FOR THE DANCE-OFF)**

*Celebrate everyone doing a great job. Collect the wrapping paper in the trash can as leaders head back to their seats. Get the kids to put the other wrapping supplies in their bins, then collect the bins.*

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

“THAT. WAS. AMAZING! You all did some incredible wrapping! Did you see [leader’s name’s] dance moves? I mean, whoa! Let’s give a big hand to all of our leaders. They’re such great sports!

“Well, now we all have a chance to put our dancing skills to good use, because it’s time for us to sing and worship God. Everyone up on your feet!”



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! We've had a great month so far seeing how God's plan led up to the birth of Jesus. God's plan actually goes way back to the very beginning!"

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

"In the beginning, God made the world and everything in it. God created everything out of a deep, deep love—including people. But when people turned away from God, the world was broken.

"God had a plan to bless the whole world through Abraham's family, the Israelites. But over and over again, the people turned away from God. Things got so bad that eventually, other nations invaded and captured the Israelites. God's people must have wondered if God still loved them and had a plan for them.

"God spoke through prophets about the great Rescuer who would come when the time was right. Many years later, God sent an angel to tell a young woman named Mary that she would have a very special baby.

"Now listen, we've got a lot to celebrate today, because Christmas is almost here! I've got the perfect way to talk about when Jesus was born. Let's open up some presents!"

*Set the five wrapped boxes on the table.*

"Just to be clear, these aren't presents for us to keep. There are props inside that will help us tell the story."

### CAESAR AUGUSTUS' DECREE

**STORYTELLER:** "Okay, who would like to come up here and open our first present? Let's see what's inside!"

*Choose a kid to open box #1 to reveal a bag of Caesar salad. Have the kid sit back down, then hold up the salad for everyone to see.*

*(confused)* "Ummm . . . what is this? *(Laugh as you realize the connection.)* Oh, I get it! So, during this time, the Jewish people were being ruled by the Romans. The Roman ruler was named Caesar Augustus. Get it? Caesar salad? Caesar Augustus? *(laughing again)* Maybe I'll have this for lunch later.

"So, the real Caesar Augustus—who was NOT a salad—commanded that everyone should be counted so they could pay taxes. He said that everyone had to go to their hometown to be listed.

"It's time to open our next present.

*Choose a kid to open box #2 to reveal the Israel road map. Have the kid sit back down, then hold up the map for everyone to see. (Unfold it, if possible.)*



PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

“What’s this? It’s a map! We don’t really use these a lot anymore. We usually use phones to find our way around. But people used to use maps like these to find their way from one place to another.

“In the town of Nazareth, there was a carpenter named Joseph who was engaged to a young woman named . . . (Pause for response.) Mary. Both Joseph and Mary had been born into the family line of King David. So that meant they would have to make the long journey to Bethlehem, the TOWN of David, in order to be counted.

“It was a long way from Nazareth to Bethlehem.

*Hold up the map. If it’s actually a map of Israel/Palestine, point out where the two cities are.*

“In those days, it would have taken about a week of walking! Not only that, Mary was pregnant with a baby—a baby whose birth had been announced by an angel!

“Remember what the angel Gabriel had said to Mary.

*Open the Bible to Luke 1:31-32 (NIV) and read.*

*“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.”*

## ROAD TRIP

**STORYTELLER:** “Who wants to open the next gift?

*Choose a kid to open box #3 to reveal the plush sheep. Have the kid sit back down, then hold up the sheep for everyone to see.*

“Awwww. How cute! (Pause.) So we’ve got a sheep here. I wonder why?”

“Well, Mary and Joseph traveled ALL the way from Nazareth to Bethlehem. But when they finally got to Bethlehem, the town was full. There was no guest room where they could stay.

“Finally, Mary and Joseph found a place to stay . . . with the animals.” (Reference the sheep.)

## JESUS IS BORN

**STORYTELLER:** “Time for the next present! Who wants to open it?”

*Choose a kid to open box #4 to reveal the baby doll. Have the kid sit back down, then hold up the baby doll for everyone to see.*

“While Mary and Joseph were there in Bethlehem, the time came for the baby to be born. They named Him Jesus, just as the angel had said.

“Who would like to open the last present?”



PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

*Choose a kid to open box #5 to reveal the swaddle blanket. Have the kid sit back down. Wrap up the baby doll in the swaddle blanket.*

"There we go—nice and snug!

"Mary wrapped the baby Jesus in strips of cloth and laid Him in a manger. A manger is where animals usually eat their food. Jesus is God's Son . . . the best gift ever . . . and He came into the world in the most unexpected way!"

### WRAPPING UP THE STORY

**STORYTELLER:** "Jesus would grow up to teach people amazing things about God and heal people who were sick. Jesus spent His days showing love and showing people what God is like. Eventually, Jesus chose to lay down His life for all of us when He died on the cross for our sins. Because of Jesus, we can have a relationship with God that lasts forever! That's why Jesus is the GREATEST gift.

"Say that with me."

**SLIDE: BOTTOM LINE**

**KIDS AND STORYTELLER:** "Jesus is the greatest gift."

**STORYTELLER:** "That's right! Let's pray."

**SLIDE: THEME BACKGROUND**

### PRAY

**STORYTELLER:** "God, thank You so much for giving us the greatest gift ever. It was always Your plan to send Your Son, Jesus, to be our Savior! Thank You for loving us so much and helping us know that **[Basic Truth] we can trust You no matter what.** Today, we want to honor You and thank You for sending Jesus for us. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."





PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

## CLOSER

*Host enters as Storyteller exits.*

**HOST:** “Jesus is the very best, most life-changing and incredible gift the world has ever known! It was always God’s plan to send Jesus to be our Savior. Because of Jesus, we can be forgiven of our sins—the things we’ve done wrong. Jesus came to make everything right, once and for all.

**SLIDE: BOTTOM LINE**

“That’s why **Jesus is the greatest gift.**

“Here’s the really amazing part. When we put our trust in Jesus, we have a forever relationship with God that nothing can ever take away!

“Think about what it was like for God’s people back when Jesus was born. They had been promised a Savior. And they had been waiting and waiting and waiting for it to happen. Then, when the time was right, Jesus was born in Bethlehem.

**SLIDE: GOD’S BIG STORY TIMELINE**

**SLIDE: WEEK 3 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.*

“Jesus was and IS the Savior God had promised!

“As we get ready to celebrate Christmas over the next week, let’s take time to thank God for sending Jesus. Let’s remember what Christmas is really about. Let’s remember the BEST and most important gift we could ever receive, which is to know Jesus and put our trust in Him.

“You can head to Small Group now and talk about that with your leader and your friends. 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**