



PRELUDE      SOCIAL      WORSHIP      STORY      GROUPS      HOME

PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION  
15 MINUTES

**MADE TO IMAGINE**  
an activity that lets preschoolers pretend, imagine, and role play to enhance their learning



**3. GATHERING SHEEP\***

**WHAT YOU NEED:** Cotton balls or white pom-poms and plastic decorative candy canes; *Optional "Allergy Alert Poster," cardstock, and regular-size candy canes*

*\*Be sure to list the items you will be using today on the "Allergy Alert Poster" (in the Prelude folder) and post it at the door to your room.*

**BIBLE STORY**

The shepherds run to Jesus.

**THE SHEPHERDS**  
**LUKE 2:8-21**

**WHAT YOU DO:**

**BEFORE THE ACTIVITY:** Scatter the cotton balls/pom-poms around the activity area. *Option: Copy "Allergy Alert Poster" on cardstock, list candy canes, and post at the door.*

**MEMORY VERSE**

"God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son."

**JOHN 3:16, GNT**

**DURING THE ACTIVITY:** Give each child a candy cane or if you have more children than candy canes, encourage children to gather two sheep then pass the cane to another child and repeat until each child has a turn. Encourage children to pretend to be a shepherd and use the candy cane as a "staff" to gather the "sheep." Gather all the sheep into the center of the activity area.

**AFTER THE ACTIVITY:** Introduce the Bible story and the shepherds that heard the special news.

**KEY QUESTION**

How do we know God loves us?

**WHAT YOU SAY:**

**BEFORE THE ACTIVITY:** "Friends, join me over here. Look at all these white cotton balls. Let's pretend they're sheep and we are shepherds. Shepherds have staffs that help direct and gather their sheep. (*Hold up candy cane.*) What does this candy cane look like? It kind of looks like a shepherd staff. We will use these as our staffs to gather sheep."

**BOTTOM LINE**

God gave us Jesus.

**DURING THE ACTIVITY:** "Okay, shepherds! Let's go gather the sheep. Be gentle and kind and try to get your sheep over here in the middle of our area. (*Pause.*) Wow you are good shepherds! Some of those sheep are tricky. Keep trying to gather them with your staff. (*Once the sheep are gathered, scatter again. Repeat as desired.*) That was so fun! You did a great job of being shepherds!"

**BASIC TRUTH**

God loves me.

**AFTER THE ACTIVITY:** "In our story today, we will hear about real shepherds who got some amazing news while they were in the field taking care of their sheep."

**TRANSITION:** Move to Worship and Story by pretending to be sheep.



WEEK  
**THREE**  
DECEMBER 2023

SMALL GROUP  
**3-5** YEAR  
-OLDS

PRELUDE      SOCIAL      WORSHIP      STORY      GROUPS      HOME

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT  
25 MINUTES

**MADE TO CREATE**  
an activity that allows preschoolers to review the Bible story, bottom line, or memory verse by creating a craft to take home



**5. STAND UP TRAIN**  
[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

**WHAT YOU NEED:** "Stand Up Train" and "Stand Up Train Sticker" Activity Pages; cardstock; Avery® #5294 labels or equivalent; craft tubes; crayons or washable markers; scissors; craft knife; and a permanent marker

**WHAT YOU DO:**

**BEFORE THE ACTIVITY:** Copy "Stand Up Train" on cardstock and cut, one per child. Write each child's name on their paper. Copy "Stand Up Train Sticker" on label paper, one per child. Cut craft tubes into 1½" sections, two per child. Cut a ½" slit down the center of each tube section.

**DURING THE ACTIVITY:** Encourage children to decorate their train cutout and add the sticker. If desired, have children color the train wheels. Leader helps slide the train into the slits in the three tube sections.

**AFTER THE ACTIVITY:** Review the Bible story.

**WHAT YOU SAY:**

**BEFORE THE ACTIVITY:** "Friends, come sit with me at the table. I have something very special for you to make today."

**DURING THE ACTIVITY:** "You're going to make your very own Christmas Train! Hooray! Color your train. (Pause.) Super! I have a sticker for you to add to your train. It has our memory verse written on it. Let's say our verse together. 'God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son,' John 3:16. Nice job! Your train needs wheels. We can use these tube pieces for the wheels. You can keep them like this, or you can color them. (Pause.) Find the slits on each of the pieces, and we'll slide your train into them. (Help as needed.) Your trains look amazing!"

**AFTER THE ACTIVITY:** "The Christmas story begins with a girl named Mary. God sent an angel with a special message for her. The angel said that Mary would have a baby and that baby would be Jesus, God's Son! Then Mary and Joseph had to travel a long way to the town of Bethlehem. When Mary and Joseph got there, they stayed in a stable full of animals. Then . . . Baby Jesus was born!"

"That night, some shepherds were out in a field taking care of sheep when an angel appeared in the sky! There was a bright light shining all around. They were afraid! But the angel said, 'Don't be afraid! God's Son, Jesus, has been born. You will find Him in a manger!' Then the whole sky filled with angels praising God and singing, 'Glory to God in the highest!' The shepherds ran to find Jesus. They found Baby Jesus, just like the angel said. Jesus, God's Son, had been born. God loves us so much that God gave us Jesus. **How do we know God loves us? God gave us Jesus.**"

**BIBLE STORY**

The shepherds run to Jesus.

**THE SHEPHERDS**  
**LUKE 2:8-21**

**MEMORY VERSE**

"God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son."

**JOHN 3:16, GNT**

**KEY QUESTION**

How do we know God loves us?

**BOTTOM LINE**

God gave us Jesus.

**BASIC TRUTH**

God loves me.



WEEK  
**THREE**  
DECEMBER 2023

SMALL GROUP  
**3-5** YEAR  
-OLDS

PRELUDE      SOCIAL      WORSHIP      STORY      GROUPS      HOME

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT  
25 MINUTES

---

**MADE TO REFLECT**  
an activity that encourages personal application and prayer

---



**BIBLE STORY**

The shepherds run to Jesus.

**THE SHEPHERDS**  
**LUKE 2:8-21**

---

**MEMORY VERSE**

"God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son."

**JOHN 3:16, GNT**

---

**KEY QUESTION**

How do we know God loves us?

---

**BOTTOM LINE**

God gave us Jesus.

---

**BASIC TRUTH**

God loves me.

---

## 6. JOURNAL AND PRAYER

[PRAY TO GOD | PRAYER ACTIVITY]

**WHAT YOU NEED:** "Memory Verse Card" from Week One in Bible, journal, and fun-shaped pen

**WHAT YOU DO:**

**BEFORE THE ACTIVITY:** If you do not have the "Memory Verse Card" in your Bible, copy "Memory Verse Card" on cardstock and cut, one per small group. Place one card in your Bible at John 3:16. Keep this card in your Bible all month.

**DURING THE ACTIVITY:** Lead the children to pretend to be sheep as you go to your Small Group spot. Sit down and gather the children around you. Review the memory verse and motions, then encourage the children to help you make a list of people they can tell the good news about Jesus.

**AFTER THE ACTIVITY:** Pray with the children using the list you made in the journal.

**WHAT YOU SAY:**

**BEFORE THE ACTIVITY:** "It's Small Group time! Today, I'll pretend to be a shepherd, and you can pretend to be my sheep. What does a sheep say? (Pause.) Yes! That means you'll say, 'Baa-baa-baa' all the way to our Small Group spot. Come on little sheep! Follow me! (Pretend to be a shepherd while the children pretend to be sheep as you walk to your Small Group spot.) We made it, little sheep! Now we can sit down and talk about today's Bible story. One, two, three, sit down with me!"

**DURING THE ACTIVITY:** (Open the Bible and lay it in front of the children.) "In our Bible story today, God sent angels to some shepherds to tell them the good news about Jesus! Do you remember what a shepherd takes care of? (Pause.) Yes, shepherds take care of sheep. What was the good news the angels told the shepherds? (Pause.) You got it! The angels told the shepherds that Jesus had been born! When the shepherds heard about Jesus, they ran to see Him. Then they ran to go tell everyone the good news that **God gave us Jesus!**"

"We have been learning a Bible verse about how **God gave us Jesus.** It says, 'God (flat hand with thumb to forehead, pull down) loved the world (cross arms over chest) so much (pull hands away from each other) that he gave his only Son,' (rock arms like a baby) John 3:16. (Open hands like a book.) Let's stand up and say that Bible verse together! Just say what I say and do what I do. 'God (flat hand with thumb to forehead, pull down) loved the world (cross arms over chest) so much (pull hands away from each other) that he gave his only Son,' (rock arms like a baby) John 3:16. (Open hands like a book.)"



WEEK  
**THREE**  
DECEMBER 2023

SMALL GROUP  
**3-5** YEAR  
-OLDS

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT  
25 MINUTES

## (6. JOURNAL AND PRAYER, CONTINUED)

"Yay! God loves us! **God gave us Jesus!** Now let's sit down so we can write in our prayer journal and talk to God. (*Open journal.*) The shepherds were so excited that **God gave us Jesus** that they ran and told everyone the good news! Let's make a list of people we can tell the good news about Jesus. When I say your name, tell me one person you can tell that **God gave us Jesus**. I'll write it in our prayer journal." (*Remember to print as you write in the journal so the children can recognize their names and the letters.*)

**AFTER THE ACTIVITY:** "Thank you for making this list. Would anyone like to pray before I pray? (*Give each child who wants to pray the opportunity to do so.*)

"Dear God, we want everyone to hear the good news that You gave us Jesus. Please help [child's name] tell [name they listed], and [child's name] tell [name they listed] . . . (*continue with each child and who they listed*). We want everyone to know that Christmas is about You loving us so much that You gave us Your one and only Son, Jesus. We love You, God! In Jesus' name, amen."