



WEEK
ONE
JULY 2024

SMALL GROUP
K-5
STARTER

PRELUDE SOCIAL STORY WORSHIP GROUPS HOME

PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION
15 MINUTES

MADE TO PLAY

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



2. OPENING ACTIVITY

WHAT YOU NEED: "True or False Cards" Activity Pages, "True or False Leader Guide" Activity Page, and a timer

WHAT YOU DO:

- Divide the kids into two teams.
 - If you have a wide range of ages, balance older and younger kids on each team.
- Instruct each team to sit together.
- Give each team a set of cards from the "True or False Cards" Activity Page.
- Explain that you will share a statement about Christmas from the "True or False Leader Guide" Activity Page.
- Instruct each team that they have 10 seconds to work together to decide if they think the statement is true or false.
 - Correct answers will score one point for the team.
 - The team with the most points at the end wins.
- Read one statement from the "True or False Leader Guide" Activity Page and set the timer for 10 seconds.
- Direct each team to hold up their "True" or "False" answer card when the timer sounds.
- Announce the correct answer.
 - For fun, invite kids to share why statements are false—see the "True or False Leader Guide" Activity Page.
- Repeat for each statement on the "True or False Leader Guide" Activity Page.
- Celebrate the team with the most points as the winner.

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Tidings of Comfort and Joy
Shepherds and Angels
Luke 2:8-20

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Jesus brings joy to the world.

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

"Always be joyful because you belong to the Lord. I will say it again. Be joyful!"
Philippians 4:4, NIV

MONTHLY VIRTUE

Joy—Choosing to celebrate what God is doing

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

WHAT YOU SAY:

"Great job, friends! I bet you learned some new things about Jesus' birth and Christmas from that game! Is anyone else wondering why we're talking about Christmas in July? Kind of funny, right? **[Transition]** Let's go to Large Group to discover what Jesus' birth has to do with what we're learning about this month!"

Lead your group to the Large Group area.



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PRELUDE SOCIAL STORY WORSHIP GROUPS HOME

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO IMAGINE

an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play and reenactment



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1. CANDY CANE CHARADES

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Bible Story Action Cards" Activity Page, "Bible Story Prompt Cards" Activity Page, and candy canes (or prepared pipe-cleaner candy canes)

WHAT YOU DO:

- Place the stack of cards from the "Bible Story Action Cards" Activity Page at one end of your group space.
- Instruct the kids to sit on the other side of your group space.
- Spread out each of the cards from the "Bible Story Prompt Cards" Activity Page in front of the group where everyone can see them.
- Invite the kids to play a special version of Charades where the goal is to win the shepherd's staff (candy cane).
- Choose the kid who celebrated a birthday most recently to be the first "actor."
- Direct the "actor" to run to the other side of the group space, choose a card from the pile of cards from the "Bible Story Action Cards" Activity Page, and act out the scene without saying any words.
 - For younger kids who are the "actors," point out the word in bold on each card for them to focus on acting out.
- Instruct the rest of the group to try to guess which scene from the Bible Story the "actor" is acting out by referencing the set of cards in front of them from the "Bible Story Prompt Cards" Activity Page.
 - *Optional: For a group of mostly older kids, remove the "Bible Story Prompt Cards" Activity Page from play.*
- Give the kid in the group who correctly guessed the action a candy cane and direct them to be the next "actor."
- Also award the "actor" a candy cane since their acting resulted in an accurate guess.
- Continue until all of the action cards have been played.
 - If you have more kids than cards, re-use cards until every kid has had a turn.
- Challenge the kids to work together to place the "Bible Story Prompt Cards" Activity Page in order of the story.
- *Optional: Ensure every child has a candy cane to take home later.*

WHAT YOU SAY:

"That was awesome! You all were such good actors, and look at all the shepherds in this group with their shepherd's hooks! Isn't it amazing how God chose ordinary shepherds to deliver the extraordinary news of Jesus' birth? It reminds me of how simple it can be for any of us to bring joy to everyone we meet.

"What are some ways we can be like the shepherds and spread good news to the people in our lives? (*Invite responses. Encourage kids to think of simple acts of kindness, like: writing a card to a loved one, giving someone a compliment, or donating used toys.*)



CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

(1. CANDY CANE CHARADES, CONTINUED)

“Great job! Remember: **Jesus brings joy to the world.** The night Jesus was born brought so much joy to those around Him, and now we can share that same joy with others in our everyday lives.”



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CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO CREATE

an activity that explores spiritual ideas through the process of drawing, building, and designing



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Shepherds and Angels
Luke 2:8-20

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MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

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MONTHLY VIRTUE

Joy—Choosing to celebrate what God is doing

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

***2. BE GOOD NEWS**

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: White copy or construction paper, and green markers; *Optional: Christmas stickers and markers*

WHAT YOU DO:

- Instruct the kids to sit in a circle.
- Ask: "What do you think it means to be 'good news' to someone?" (*Invite responses.*)
- Give each kid one piece of paper.
- Set out the markers.
- Instruct the kids to draw the outline of a large Christmas tree, taking up the entire page.
 - For younger kids, show them how to draw a long, skinny triangle for the tree and a small rectangle for the stump.
- Direct the kids to draw one large ornament hanging from their tree in any shape they'd like (a circle, a star, etc.) as long as there is room to draw or write inside the ornament.
- Instruct the kids to draw one or two large squares under their tree to represent gifts that are also large enough to draw or write in.
- Challenge the kids to think of one person in their life who could use a little bit of joy this week. (*Maybe it's a sick family member or a neighbor who just lost their pet. Share an idea first to get the conversation going.*)
- Invite any kids who would like to share who they chose and why they thought of them.
- Direct the kids to draw or write the name of their person inside of their ornament.
- Encourage the kids to think of 1-2 things they might do to be "good news" to their person. (*They might choose to leave a note of encouragement in their neighbor's mailbox or offer to do their family member's chores this week.*)
- Invite any kids who would like to share.
- Instruct the kids to draw or write their ideas inside their drawings of gifts that are underneath the tree.
- *If time allows, as an option, allow kids to color in or decorate their Christmas tree drawings with stickers.*

WHAT YOU SAY:

"Thank you all for sharing such great ideas! I hope you get the chance to be 'good news' to the people you thought about today. When you choose to share good news with the people in your life, you are showing them the love of Jesus.

[Make It Personal] (*Share an age-appropriate story about a time in your life when someone was "good news" to you. How did it make you feel? What did it teach you about God's love?*)



CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

(* 2. BE GOOD NEWS, CONTINUED)

“There will be many times when people in our lives feel a little sad. But knowing and following **Jesus brings joy to the world!** When you remember that, every moment can be an opportunity to share God’s love and spread a little joy.”

Optional Discussion Questions for Older Kids

If you lead 4th, 5th, or 6th graders, consider asking these discussion questions:

- Why do you think God chose ordinary shepherds to deliver such an important message?
- In what ways can we share the joy of Jesus with others, like the shepherds did?
- How might encountering Jesus change our lives today?



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CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO EXPLORE

an activity that extends learning through hands on experimentation and discovery



3. MEMORY VERSE MOTION CHALLENGE
[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: Bibles

WHAT YOU DO:

- Make sure each kid has a Bible.
- Together, look up Philippians 4:4, using the Bible

Navigation Tips below.

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Tidings of Comfort and Joy
Shepherds and Angels
Luke 2:8-20

Finding verses with a multi-age group: Guide all kids to open their Bibles to the front and find the table of contents. (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, ask a middle elementary kid (2nd-3rd grade) to find Philippians in the list under "New Testament." When the kid finds Philippians, lead them to look at the page number beside the word and say it aloud, explaining that the number tells them on what page they can find Philippians. Ask older elementary kids (4th-5th grade) to help younger ones find the correct page in their own Bibles. When they all find Philippians, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Ask a kindergartner or 1st grader to find chapter 4, and give time for all the kids to turn the pages to find it. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers, and ask a middle elementary kid to find verse 4 in chapter 4. Then, read the verse aloud slowly, especially for your pre-readers, or ask older elementary kids to read it to the group.

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Jesus brings joy to the world.

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

"Always be joyful because you belong to the Lord. I will say it again. Be joyful!"
Philippians 4:4, NlrV

- Invite the group to come up with motions for the Memory Verse.
- Kids can share multiple ideas for each part of the verse, then invite the group to agree on one.
- Share the following verse motion ideas, if needed:
 - "Always" - While pointing up, circle your pointer finger around twice
 - "be joyful" - jump in the air, throwing arms out and around
 - "because you" - point to a friend
 - "belong" - hug yourself
 - "to the Lord." - point to the sky
 - "I will say it again." - walk around in a circle
 - "Be joyful!" - jump in the air, throwing arms out and around
 - "Philippians 4:4, NlrV" - palms together and then open them like a book
 - "Rejoice" - jump in the air, throwing arms out and around
 - "in the Lord" - point to the sky
 - "always." - While pointing up, circle your pointer finger around twice
 - "I will say it again:" - walk around in a circle
 - "Rejoice!" - jump in the air, throwing arms out and around
 - "Philippians 4:4, NIV" - palms together and then open them like a book

MONTHLY VIRTUE

Joy—Choosing to celebrate what God is doing

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

WHAT YOU SAY:

"That was fun! How many of you think you will be able to show someone in your family your Memory Verse motions today? (Invite responses.) Great! Our verse reminds us that because **Jesus brings joy to the world**, and we belong to Him, we will ALWAYS have something to be joyful about. Nice job, everyone!" (Give each kid a high five or fist bump.)



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PRELUDE SOCIAL STORY WORSHIP GROUPS HOME

GETTING READY

HERE'S EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW TO GET READY FOR THIS WEEK

SOCIAL: PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION (15 MINUTES)

Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Get ready to experience today's story. **(Choose one or both of these activities.)**

1. EARLY ARRIVER

Made to Move: an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Offering container
- Music player
- Upbeat Christmas music

2. OPENING ACTIVITY

Made to Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Print "True or False Cards" Activity Page on cardstock and cut apart, two sets for each Small Group
- Print "True or False Leader Guide" Activity Page on paper, one for each Small Group
- Timer

GROUPS: CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT (25 MINUTES)

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible story applies to real life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

(Choose as many of these activities as you like.)

** If you don't have time to do all these activities, be sure to do activity #2.*

1. CANDY CANE CHARADES

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

Made to Imagine: an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play and reenactment

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Print "Bible Story Action Cards" Activity Page on cardstock and cut apart, one set for each Small Group
- Print "Bible Story Prompt Cards" Activity Page on

- cardstock and cut apart, one set for each Small Group
- Candy canes, one for each kid
 - For a non-food version: Twist together red and white pipe cleaners to resemble the shape of a candy cane.
 - *Optional: Ensure every child has a candy cane to take home later.*

* 2. BE GOOD NEWS

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

Made to Create: an activity that explores spiritual ideas through the process of drawing, building, and designing

WHAT YOU NEED:

- White copy or construction paper, one sheet for each kid
- Green markers, one for each kid
- *Optional: Christmas stickers and markers, enough for a Small Group to share*

3. OPPOSITES

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

Made to Explore: an activity that extends learning through hands-on experimentation and discovery

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Bibles, one for each kid

4. PRAY AND DISMISS

[PRAY TO GOD | PRAYER ACTIVITY]

Made to Reflect: an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Print "Color Prayers" Activity Page, one for each (older) kid
- Skittles® (or colored beads in red, orange, yellow, green, and purple), five (one of each color) for each kid
- Pens, one for each (older) kid

HOME: PROMPTING ACTION BEYOND THE EXPERIENCE

- Print on cardstock or email this week's devotionals and Parent Cue cards.
- Tell parents about our additional family resource: **Parent Cue app.**