

3-5 Year-Olds

Small Group

December — Week 1

Small Group Leader Guide

Today's Suggested Schedule

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 minutes)

Social: Providing time for fun interaction

1. Love Here, There, Everywhere
2. Craft Stick Puzzles
3. You've Got Mail

Large Group (20 minutes)

Worship: Inviting people to respond to God Story: Communicating God's truth in engaging ways

- Worship
- Bible Story
- Prayer

Small Group (25 minutes)

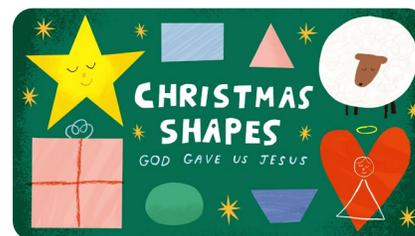
Groups: Creating a safe place to connect

1. Memory Verse with Motions
2. Ring the Bell
3. Color by Shape
4. God Gave Us Jesus
5. Angel Ornament
6. Journal and Prayer

Home: Prompting action beyond the experience

- Going Home
- Memory Verse Card
- Parent Cue Card (print or email)
- [Parent Cue App](#) and [ParentCue.org](#)

THIS MONTH



Today's Bible Story

The Angel and Mary Luke 1:26-33,38

An angel tells Mary about Jesus.

Key Question

How do we know God loves us?

Bottom Line

God gave us Jesus.

Memory Verse

**"God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son."
John 3:16 GNT**



Inclusive Pro Tips

This leader guide is designed to be inclusive of children with a special need, learning difference, or disability who attend a group with their peers. See highlighted sections below for additional inclusive pro-tips. Check out the additional Special Needs resources included.

SOCIAL 1/3

Love Here, There, Everywhere

What You Need

- Heart-shaped dessert plates
- Option: Paper plates and heart stickers in place of heart plates.



① What You Do

Before the Activity

1. Option: Adhere several heart stickers to each paper plate, one per child.
2. Gather in an open area of the room and give each child a heart-shaped plate.

During the Activity

1. Instruct children to touch their plate to their head, tummy, knees, elbow, and feet.
2. Repeat as many times as desired.

After the Activity

Introduce the Bible Story.

② What You Say

Before the Activity

"Hello, everyone! Come spread out with me. I have a fun game for us to play today using these . . . (**hold up a heart-shaped plate**) hearts! Hearts make us think of love!"

During the Activity

"I have a heart for each of you. (**Give each child a plate.**) I will call out a place on your body, and I want you to hold it there until I say, 'In the air.' Get your hearts ready.

"Everyone, hold your heart on your knee. (**Pause.**) In the air! (**Pause.**) Hold your heart on your head. (**Pause.**) In the air! Hold your heart on your tummy. (**Pause.**) In the air! (**Pause.**) Hold your heart on your elbow. (**Pause.**) In the air! (**Pause.**) Hold your heart on your feet. (**Pause.**) In the air! (**Pause.**) Great job!"
(Repeat as many times as desired.)

After the Activity

"Now friends, hold your heart on your heart. (**Pause.**) Today we are going to hear how much God loves us in our true story from the Bible. I can't wait to hear all about God's love! Let's go!"

Transition → Move to Worship and Story by gently tapping each child with a heart plate and saying "God loves [**child's name**] so much, God gave us Jesus."

3-5 Year-Olds

Small Group

December — Week 1

GROUPS 1/6

Memory Verse with Motions

Memory Verse Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

No Supplies Needed

Inclusive Optional Supplies

- "Memory Verse Hand Motions" PDF
- Cardstock
- Scissors

Note

You can find examples of hand motions in the "Memory Verse Hand Motions" PDF and video, included in the Prelude folder and on Pinterest.

Inclusive Pro Tips



Invite children to say it with you or repeat words after you.

Set out the picture cutouts made from the "Memory Verse Hand Motions" PDF for children to hold up or point to as an alternative to saying or repeating the verse out loud.



① What You Do

Before the Activity

1. Say the Memory Verse and demonstrate the motions for the children.

During the Activity

1. Teach the Memory Verse motions. Invite the children to do them with you several times.

After the Activity

Connect the Memory Verse to the Bottom Line.

Continue on the next page →

GROUPS 1/6

Memory Verse with Motions

Memory Verse Review

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What You Need

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Inclusive Pro Tips



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② What You Say

Before the Activity

"Friends, come stand with me, and let me tell you our brand-new Memory Verse! Ready to hear it? It goes like this. 'God (**flat hand with thumb to forehead, pull down**) loved the world so much (**cross arms over chest**) that he gave his only Son,' (**rock arms like a baby**) John 3:16.'" (**Open hands like a book.**)

During the Activity

Now, let's learn the motions. The first part of our verse says: 'God (**flat hand with thumb to forehead, pull down**) Put one hand up straight in front of you with your thumb almost touching your forehead like this. (**Straight, flat hand with thumb at your forehead.**) Then move your hand straight down in front of you like this, (**pull down**) and say, 'God.' (**Repeat with children.**) Great job!

"The next part of our verse says: 'Loved the world so much.' (**Cross arms over chest.**) Give yourself a hug, (**hug yourself**) and say, 'loved the world so much.' (**Pause.**) Now let's put that together. 'God (**flat hand with thumb to forehead, pull down**) loved the world so much. (**Cross arms over chest.**) Great job!

"The next part of our verse says: 'That he gave his only Son.' (**Rock arms like a baby.**) Let's pretend we are holding a baby in our arms like this (**rock arms like a baby**) and say 'that he gave his only Son.' (**Repeat with children.**) Nice job! Now let's put that together. God (**flat hand with thumb to forehead, pull down**) loved the world so much (**cross arms over chest**) that he gave his only Son,' (**rock arms like a baby**) Super!

"Now the last part is: John 3:16. (**Open hands like a book.**) Put your hands together in front of you and open them like you are opening a book (**open hands like a book**) and say: John 3:16. (**Repeat with children.**) Great job! I think we are ready to do it all together! Ready friends? 'God (**flat hand with thumb to forehead, pull down**) loved the world so much (**cross arms over chest**) that he gave his only Son,' (**rock arms like a baby**) John 3:16. (**Open hands like a book.**) Nice job. Let's do it again!" (**Repeat several times.**)

After the Activity

"The Bible teaches us that God loves us because **[Bottom Line] God gave us Jesus.** How do we know God loves us? **[Bottom Line] God gave us Jesus."**

GROUPS 3/6

Color by Shape

Application Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- "Color by Shape" Activity Page
- Cardstock
- Crayons
- Permanent marker

Inclusive Optional Supplies

- Adaptive crayons



Inclusive Pro Tips

Provide adaptive crayons.

① What You Do

Before the Activity

1. Copy "Color by Shape" on cardstock, one per Small Group.
2. Write each child's name on their paper.

During the Activity

1. Point out the shape key on the paper.
2. Review the shapes and their corresponding colors from the key.
3. Encourage children to follow the key on the paper to color the picture.

After the Activity

Connect the Bottom Line to the Bible Story.

② What You Say

Before the Activity

"Friends, come find a spot at the table! I have a fun page for us to color."

During the Activity

"It's a color-by-shape picture. That means that each spot with a shape has a color that goes with it. Look at the key at the bottom. **(Point to the key.)** Do you see the heart? What color is next to the heart? **(Pause for responses.)** That's right! So in the picture, when you see a heart, color it red. So let's match up the shapes and colors to see what's on our page! Can you find the square? What color is next to the square? **(Pause.)** That's right, it's blue. Color the spaces with a square, blue. What color do you color a space if it has a star? **(Pause.)** Yes! Yellow! And the last shape is a circle! Tell me what color will you fill the spaces with a circle? **(Pause.)** Green! You got it! Okay, get coloring! **(Pause.)** Look at the beautiful angel you created! **(Pause.)** Great job!"

After the Activity

"In today's true story from the Bible, we learned that God sent an angel to give Mary a special message. The angel told Mary she was going to have a special baby. That baby is God's Son, Jesus. God showed us how much He loves all of us by sending His Son Jesus. And that is what we celebrate at Christmas! How do we know God loves us? **[Bottom Line]** God gave us Jesus!"

GROUPS 4/6

God Gave Us Jesus

Application Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

→ No supplies needed.



Inclusive Pro Tips

In place of "run" suggest another movement to include all children such as: cheer, clap, dance, move.

① What You Do

Before the Activity

1. Gather children on one side of the room with you.

During the Activity

2. Encourage children to run to the other side of the room when they hear you say "God gave us Jesus".

After the Activity

Connect the Bottom Line to the Bible Story.

② What You Say

Before the Activity

"Let's play a game! Everyone come stand over here with me. This is going to be fun, but you have to listen for the special message I say."

During the Activity

"I am going to say a lot of words. Some might be silly and you can laugh, but when I say "God gave us Jesus" I want you to run to the other side of the room. Are you ready? Do you have your listening ears on? Great! Here we go! Sheep, mail, pickles, cupcakes... **[Bottom Line]** God gave us Jesus! (**Pause as children run.**) Great job! Stay where you are and this time when you hear those special words, run back over here. Baby, cheese, cow, diaper... **[Bottom Line]** God gave us Jesus! (**Pause as children run.**) Great job!"

After the Activity

"In today's Bible Story, Mary listened when the angel told her she was going to have a baby. Mary was going to have a baby! 'The baby is God's Son, and you will call him Jesus.' God showed us how much He loves us all by sending His Son Jesus. And that is what we celebrate at Christmas **[Bottom Line]** God gave us Jesus! How do we know God loves us? **[Bottom Line]** God gave us Jesus!"

GROUPS 6/6

Journal and Prayer

Prayer Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- Bible
- Journal
- Fun-shaped pen

Note

You can find examples of hand motions in the "Memory Verse Hand Motions" PDF and video, included in the Prelude folder and on Pinterest.



① What You Do

Before the Activity

1. Encourage the children to cup their hands around their mouth and say the Bottom Line as you lead them to your Small Group spot.
2. Sit down and gather the children around you.

During the Activity

1. Review the Bible Story and Memory Verse Hand Motions, then encourage the children to help you make a list in the journal of people they can tell [Bottom Line] God gave us Jesus.

After the Activity

Pray with children using the list you made in the journal.

② What You Say

Before the Activity

"It's Small Group time! Today we are going to cup our hands around our mouth, like this (*demonstrate*), and say [**Bottom Line**] God gave us Jesus, like the angel told Mary in our Bible Story. Get your hands ready and follow me! (***Cup your hands around your mouth and repeat [Bottom Line] God gave us Jesus as you lead the children to your Small Group spot.***) Here we are! Now we can sit down and talk about today's Bible Story. One, two, three, sit down with me!"

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GROUPS 6/6

Journal and Prayer

Prayer Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- Bible
- Journal
- Fun-shaped pen

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You can find examples of hand motions in the "Memory Verse Hand Motions" PDF and video, included in the Prelude folder and on Pinterest.



During the Activity

"(Open the Bible and lay it in front of the children.) "In our Bible Story today, God sent an angel to tell Mary something very special. Do you remember what the angel told Mary? **(Pause.)** Yes! The angel told Mary that she was going to have God's Son, Jesus!

'God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son.' John 3:16 God loved you **(point to child)** so much that **[Bottom Line]** God gave us Jesus. God loved you **(point to child)** so much, **[Bottom Line]** God gave us Jesus. **(Continue with each child.)** That's how we know God loves us because **[Bottom Line]** God gave us Jesus!

"Hey! That reminds me of the new Bible verse we are going to start learning today! It says, 'God **(flat hand with thumb to forehead, pull down)** loved the world so much **(cross arms over chest)** that he gave his only Son,' **(rock arms like a baby)** John 3:16. **(Open hands like a book.)** Let's say that together! Just stand up and say what I say and do what I do! 'God **(flat hand with thumb to forehead, pull down)** loved the world so much **(cross arms over chest)** that he gave his only Son,'" **(rock arms like a baby)** John 3:16. **(Open hands like a book.)**

"Yay! **[Bottom Line]** God gave us Jesus! **(Clap.)** And that is what Christmas is all about! God loved us so much **[Bottom Line]** God gave us Jesus! Now let's sit down so we can write in our prayer journal and talk to God. **(Open journal.)** Since the angel told Mary that **[Bottom Line]** God gave us Jesus, let's make a list of people we can tell that **[Bottom Line]** God gave us Jesus! Then we can use the list when we pray. When I say your name, tell me one person you can tell **[Bottom Line]** God gave us Jesus, and I will write it in our journal. **(Remember to print, as you write in the journal, so the children can recognize their names and the letters.)**

After the Activity

"Look at all the people we can tell that **[Bottom Line]** God gave us Jesus! **(Hold up journal.)** Let's pray and talk to God about them. Would anyone like to pray before I pray? **(Give each child who wants to pray the opportunity to do so.)** Dear God, Thank You for the true story of Christmas, about how You loved the world so much You gave us Your Son, Jesus. Wow! That's a lot of love! Please help **[child's name]** tell **(person they listed)** that **[Bottom Line]** God gave us Jesus and **[child's name]** tell **(person they listed)** that **[Bottom Line]** God gave us Jesus and **[child's name]** tell... **(continue saying this with each child)**. We love You, God! In Jesus' name. Amen."