



WEEK TWO – DECEMBER 2024 – SECOND/THIRD

Bible Story: *Send Me An Angel* | Luke 1:26-38; Matthew 1:18-25

Bottom Line: *Celebrate because God is with you*

Memory Verse: “[Mary] is going to have a son. You must give him the name Jesus. That’s because he will save his people from their sins.” Matthew 1:21 (NIV)

Basic Truth: *I can trust God no matter what*

Series Overview: Have you ever stopped to listen to a group of carolers and then joined them to go spread some more Christmas cheer with others? Music is such a big part of Christmas, but it’s not the main reason we celebrate. That’s why this December, we’re singing loudly as we jam out to our Christmas Playlist to celebrate Jesus, God’s greatest gift! The best gift God ever gave was Jesus. Because of Jesus, it’s possible for us to have a relationship with God that will last forever. As we get in the mix this Christmas season, let’s take time to remember the reason we celebrate in the first place: Jesus, the greatest gift the world has ever known.

Bottom Line: Celebrate because God is with you. When God sent Jesus, it was the answer to many, many prayers and years of waiting. The people must have wondered what God was doing or if God was still working. We can feel the same way in our own lives. Yet, time and time again, we see that we can trust God no matter what, and celebrate because God sent Jesus for us.

9:00 - 9:15| 11:00 – 11:15 | EARLY ARRIVERS ACTIVITY

Opening Small Group Activity

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

What You Need: Timer, and miscellaneous items around your group space

What You Do:

- Greet each kid by name as they arrive.
- Invite kids who brought an offering to place it in the FATW bag.
- Divide the kids into pairs.
- Share that you're going to name a category of something you are looking for, and kids will have 15 seconds to look around the room and find one thing that fits into that category.
 - Here are some examples of categories:
 - something blue
 - something you use to look up the Bible
 - something you can use to write a letter
 - something you can play with, etc.
 - Accept any responses that meet the criteria—encourage kids to think creatively.
- Set a timer for 15 seconds.
- Call out an item by saying, “I’m looking for . . .” [*name of category*], start the timer, and encourage the pairs to find something in your group space that fits that category.
- If a pair doesn’t find something that fits in the category, inform them that they’re out.
- If a pair’s “finding” requires explaining, invite the pair to share why the item they found fits in the category.
- The last pair of kids remaining in the game wins.

What You Say:

“Great job bringing me the things I was looking for! Even though some of you couldn’t find what I wanted, you all were willing to play your part in helping me find what I needed. *[Transition]* **Let’s go to Large Group and hear about two people who were willing to play a big part in God’s plan and found peace by trusting what God asked them to do.**”

9:20 - 9:50 | 11:20 – 11:50 | LARGE GROUP

Large Group Overview: In week two, we turn to Luke 1:26-38 and Matthew 1:18-25. On both occasions, an angel visited Mary and Joseph to inform them that they would be the parents of the coming Savior of the world. They would call Him Immanuel, which means “God with us”. They could have said no and refused, but even though they were afraid, they trusted that God was with them through it all.

9:50 – 10:10 | 11:50 – 12:10 | SMALL GROUP

Erase + Recite

[Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

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

What You Need: Bibles, small dry-erase board, dry-erase marker

What You Do:

- Divide kids into groups of two or three.
 - Place older kids with younger kids if possible.
- Guide kids to look up Matthew 1:21 using the Bible Navigation Tips below:
 - ***Finding verses with 2nd and 3rd graders:*** Guide them 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, lead them to find

Matthew in the list under “New Testament.” When the kids find Matthew, lead them to look at the page number beside the word. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find Matthew. Help the kids find the page. When they find Matthew, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find chapter 1. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find verse 21 in chapter 1.

- Read the verse together several times.
- Invite the kids to sit in a circle—setting their open Bibles aside.
- Write the Memory Verse on a small dry-erase board.
- Choose a kid and give the dry-erase board to them.
- Instruct them to erase one word from the verse.
- Direct that kid to display the dry-erase board, then have the group read the verse again, this time reciting the missing word from memory.
- Keep passing the board around the circle, allowing each kid to erase one word and then read the verse as a group.
- Continue until all the words are gone, and the group can recite the entire verse from memory.
 - *NOTE: Allow the group to reference their Bibles as needed.*

What You Say:

“Joseph was probably confused when it became clear Mary was going to have a baby. God sent an angel to Joseph in a dream to tell Joseph not to be afraid.

*“Mary and Joseph both trusted God even before they knew God’s plan. That is why they were able to have peace when they found out they would be having God’s Son, Jesus. They knew God was with them, and God would help them through whatever they were about to face. In the same way, we can trust that God will always be with us! So let’s **[Bottom Line] celebrate because God is with you!**”*

Pray + Dismiss

[Pray to God | Prayer Activity]

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

What You Need: crepe paper streamers

What You Do:

- Encourage the kids to sit in a circle.
- Read together out loud what is written on the streamers: “God is with me all the time.”
- Go around the circle and invite each kid to share a way God has been with them.
 - Prompt with ideas, as needed.
- Instruct the rest of the group to wave their streamers in celebration each time a kid shares.
 - *NOTE: If kids don't have crepe paper streamers, hand them each a streamer piece or simply have them clap and celebrate when someone shares.*
- Close the group time in prayer.

What You Say:

“Dear God, thank You for being with us all the time. We know that You are with us in so many ways. Help us to remember that no matter what we are going through, You promise to be with us all the time. We can have peace and celebrate You no matter what we are going through. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.”

*“Let’s wave our streamers one more time to **[Bottom Line]** celebrate because **God is with you!**”*