



WEEK ONE – DECEMBER 2024 – KINDER/FIRST

Bible Story: *The Word* | John 1:1-5, 14

Bottom Line: *God always had a plan to send Jesus.*

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 (NirV)

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: **God always had a plan to send Jesus.** Much of what we celebrate at Christmas is an incredible reminder that God can be trusted no matter what. Since the very beginning, God made a promise to save the world and then followed through with Jesus. Because of Jesus, we can celebrate the opportunity to have a relationship with God that lasts forever.

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: “Gift” Activity Page, gift bows, bandana, and wall tape

What You Do:

- Greet each kid by name as they arrive.
- Invite kids who brought an offering to place it in the FATW bag.
- Use the wall tape to adhere the “Gift” Activity Page to the wall at the kid’s eye level.
- Point out the gift.
- Explain that you will play “Pin the Bow on the Gift Box.”
 - Instruct the kids to line up, one behind the other.
 - Help the first kid to cover their eyes with the bandana.
 - Peel the covering from the adhesive backing of a gift bow and hand it to the kid who is wearing the blindfold.
 - Walk the first kid over to the “Gift” Activity Page and spin them around twice.
 - Encourage the kid to stick their bow onto the “Gift” Activity Page using only one hand!
 - Remove the blindfold and allow the kid to see where their bow ended up on the gift.
 - Return the kid to the group to pass the blindfold off to the next kid in line.
- Repeat until each kid has had a turn.
- If time allows, play another round.

What You Say:

“I love that game! It’s fun to give and receive gifts during this time of year.
[Transition] Today, we’ll discover how God always had a plan to send us the greatest gift EVER! Come with me!”

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

Large Group Overview: We kick off week 1 at the very beginning. In John 1:1-5, 14, we learn that before there was anything, even life itself, there was the Word. Jesus was this Word — a light that became a human to shine in the darkness and show us Who God is. We get to see the plan God had for us from the very beginning and celebrate because of the gift of Jesus.

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

A Very Special Baby

[Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

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

What You Need: Bibles (marked at Matthew 1:21 for kindergartners), “Matthew 1:21 Pictures” Activity Pages, and floor tape

What You Do:

- Divide the kids into groups of two to three.
- Give each group of kids a Bible.
- Guide the kids to look up Matthew 1:21 using the Bible Navigation Tips below.
 - ***Finding verses with kindergartners:*** Guide children to open the Bibles to the marked page. Point to the word *Matthew* at the top of the page as you say “Matthew” aloud. Then guide children to find the big

number 1 on the page. Explain that this is the chapter number. Finally, guide them to look under the big 1 for the little 21; this is the verse number. Tell them to leave their finger on the verse as you read the verse aloud. Then lead everyone to say the verse together.

- ***Finding verses with 1st 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.” You can help by telling them that Matthew starts with the letters M-A. 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.
 - Once everyone has found the verse, lead the kids in reading it together.
 - Repeat the first sentence aloud. Remind the kids that the angel said Mary would have a baby, but this baby was VERY special because He was God’s only Son.
 - Lay out the “Matthew 1:21 Pictures” Activity Pages in verse order on the floor in front of the kids.
 - Point to each picture as you repeat the verse together.
 - Spread the pictures out, secure them with floor tape, then model for the kids how to jump from one picture to the other in verse order.
 - Lead the kids to form a line.
 - Encourage the kids to take turns jumping from one picture to the other as they recite the Memory Verse.
 - If time allows, invite the kids to line back up and give them another try!

What You Say:

“Celebrating Christmas, when Jesus was born, is SO special and important! Do you know why Jesus being born at Christmas is so important? (Invite responses.) Because [Bottom Line] God always had a plan to send Jesus.

*“When we sin—when we do things we know are wrong—it hurts our friendship with God. The truth is we all mess up, but God LOVES us so much that God gave us Jesus to make everything right again! I am so glad that **[Bottom Line]** God always had a plan to send Jesus.”*

God’s Plan!

[Talk about God | Bible Story Review]

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

What You Need: Bibles marked at John 1:1-5, “The Word Questions” Activity Page, and a device for playing upbeat music

What You Do:

- Divide the kids into groups of three.
- Give each group a Bible marked at John 1:1-5.
- Keep one Bible for yourself.
- Direct the kids to open the Bible up and place one finger on John 1 by modeling it with your own Bible.
- Invite the kids to follow along as you read the first verse—John 1:1.
- Explain that you’ll read the verse again, but this time you’ll replace “the Word” with “Jesus.”
 - For example: (*“In the beginning, [Jesus] was already there. [Jesus] was with God, and [Jesus] was God.”*)
- Invite the kids to repeat after you.
- Let the kids know “the Word” that John wrote about is Jesus. Jesus is the Word, God’s message, to us!
Invite kids to follow along as you read the remaining verses (2-5).
- Collect the Bibles and gather the kids together.
- Explain that you’re going to play music, and the kids are to dance and celebrate as you play the music and freeze when you stop it.

- Model what celebrating could look like (jumping up and down, clapping, etc.).
- Start the music.
- Encourage kids to dance.
- Stop the music.
- Instruct the kids to freeze.
- Once the kids are frozen, read a Bible Story Review Question from the “The Word Questions” Activity Page. (Choose any kid to answer.)
 - *NOTE: if a kid needs help answering the question, allow them to ask a friend for help.*
- Continue starting and stopping the music randomly until all questions on “The Word Questions” Activity Page have been asked—inviting different kids to respond each time.

What You Say:

*“Great job celebrating and talking about our Bible Story, friends! I’m so happy to know that God loves us so much and **[Bottom Line] God always had a plan to send Jesus.** That’s what Christmas is all about—celebrating God’s greatest gift, Jesus! And because of Jesus, we can know what God is like. When we follow Jesus, we can be friends with God! That makes Jesus’ birth at Christmas even more epic than we could have ever imagined.”*

[Make It Personal] (Share an age-appropriate example of a time things didn’t go the way you wanted. What helped you remember God’s plan was still at work? Share how knowing that God always had a plan to send Jesus helped you trust God.)

As adults arrive to pick up, encourage the kids to share the **[Bottom Line] God always had a plan to send Jesus!**