



WEEK TWO – DECEMBER 2024 – PRETEEN

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

Key Question: *What helps you remember that 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 (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.

Key Question: What helps you remember that God is with you? We start with this question to help preteens start thinking about all the times that God has been there for them in the past. When they focus on the things God has already done instead of their current circumstances, it makes it a little easier to face new troubles that may come up, and helps them to remember that they are not alone!

9:05 - 9:20 | 11:05 – 11:20 | EARLY ARRIVERS ACTIVITY

Opening Small Group Activity

Connect: an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

What You Need: Gift bows

What You Do:

- Welcome kids as they arrive and invite them to place their offering in the FATW bag.
- Gather the kids together in your group space and set out paper and markers.
- Invite a kid to the front of your space and give them a card from the “Picture It” Activity Page.
- Instruct them to keep their card a secret for now.
- Explain to the group that the kid with the card will guide them to draw an image by sharing steps but not the name of what they are to draw.
- Explain the following as an example:
 - If the image on the card was a flower, the kid could give the following instructions:
 - Draw one large circle.
 - Add 5 smaller circles around the edges of the first circle.
 - Draw a long line at the bottom of the large circle.
 - Add 2 oval shapes connected to the line.
- Point out that in the example, words directly related to the picture such as petals, leaves, flowers, or a stem were not used.
- Encourage the rest of the group not to share their guess until all directions have been given and everyone is done drawing.
- Invite kids to take turns choosing a card and giving drawing directions as the rest of the group follows along.
- Assist kids as needed with sharing clues about their pictures.
- Have the kid reveal the picture on the card to the group.

- Let the group display their drawings and determine whose drawing resembles closest to the image described.
- Repeat as interest and time allow or until all cards are complete.

What You Say:

“When someone describes something but you can’t see it, can you know for sure what it is? You all did a great job drawing the images your friends were describing. All the images in our game were things you’ve seen before. Some of you could picture them in your mind before the instructions were complete! Can you imagine trying to picture something you’ve never seen before? [Transition] In today’s Bible story, someone was given a description of something that had never happened before or been seen by anyone—EVER! Let’s go to Large Group and find out what it was.”

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

Take a Snapshot

[Live for God | Application Activity]

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

What You Need: Inflated balloon, duct tape, permanent marker, scissors

What You Do:

- Gather the kids together in your group space.
- Remind kids that when we choose to follow Jesus, we can have a relationship with God. God is with us no matter what!
- Invite kids to think of specific times it's helpful to remember that God never leaves us.
- If kids need a prompt to get the discussion started ask:
 - When have you felt sad, hurt, or disappointed?
 - When have you tried something new, gone to a new place, or had to make new friends?
 - When have you been sick?
 - When have you been embarrassed?
 - When have you needed to apologize for something you said or did?
- As kids share, pass the balloon and permanent marker to them.
- Instruct the kids to use the permanent marker to write a few words on the balloon that describe the example they mentioned.
- ***[Make it Personal] Share an age-appropriate example from your own experience such as being bullied or facing a challenge that made you feel uneasy. How did it encourage you to remember that God was with you? What do you do to remember that he's always there? Be sure to add some words to the balloon too!***
- Ask:
 - How does knowing God is with you change the way you think about a difficult situation you're in?
 - How does it make you stronger?
- After the discussion, use scissors to cut each kid a piece of duct tape (about 4-6 inches long).
- Invite the kids to take turns carefully attaching their piece of tape to the balloon.
- Then, have them use the permanent marker to write, "With *(their name)*" on their piece of tape.

- Once everyone has finished, invite kids to observe the covered balloon.
- Remind kids that we might still feel the impact of a bad thing that happens even when we know God is with us, but it doesn't have to steal our peace. We can remember that God is always with us, and knowing that can give us true peace no matter what.

Make It Personal With Prayer

[Pray to God | Prayer Activity]

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

What You Need: Paper and markers

What You Do:

- Gather the kids together in your group space.
- Hand each kid a marker.
- Use a marker to write “Immanuel” in big letters on a piece of paper.
- Remind kids that the name Immanuel means “God with us.”
- Pass the paper around and invite kids to take turns writing their names as close as they can to the word “Immanuel.”
- Let the kids know they can write anywhere near the name.
 - For example, alongside a letter, on top of the name, around it, etc.
- Encourage a kid who is willing to pray aloud to thank God for being near to us and with us no matter what.
- Close your group in prayer.