



WEEK THREE – DECEMBER 2024 – PRETEEN

Bible Story: *Born to Save* | *Luke 2:1-7*

Key Question: *What does Christmas mean to 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 does Christmas mean to you? Sometimes it’s easy to get caught up in the hustle and bustle of Christmas that it can start to feel a little overwhelming. However, when we turn our focus to the WHO of Christmas instead of all the things we get or do at Christmas, we start to see the joy that Jesus brings.

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

Opening Small Group Activity

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

What You Need: Dry Erase Board; Dry Erase Marker

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.
- Play a game of Reverse Charades.
- Divide the kids into two teams.
- Let each team select a “guesser” to go first. The guesser should stand facing their team.
- Stand behind the guessers, facing the rest of the kids (the guessers should not be able to see you).
- Write something Christmas-themed on the dry-erase board (or index card). Here are a few examples:
 - Christmas tree
 - A Christmas song title
 - Someone from the story of Jesus’ birth
 - A holiday dessert
- Show the teams what you wrote, making sure the guessers can’t see.
- When you say “GO,” the teams should silently act out what you wrote on the dry erase board (or index card).
- Award the first correct guesser a point for their team.
- Continue playing as time allows and be sure everyone gets an opportunity to

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

Large Group Overview: In week three, we head to Luke 2:1-7 for the birth of Jesus! This Word that God had promised from the beginning had finally arrived as a humble baby. It may not have been as everyone thought, such as a warrior or someone with high status, but it was exactly what the world needed. God’s rescue plan to save the world was in motion, and as we remember how Jesus was born, we can always find a reason to celebrate!

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

Take a Snapshot

[Live for God | Application Activity]

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

What You Need: “JOY Ornament” Activity Page, markers, glue sticks, scissors, pens, yarn

What You Do:

- Ask kids if they know the words to the song, “Joy to the World.”
- Sing or say the following verse together.
 - *“Joy to the world, the Lord is come.*
 - *Let earth receive her King.*
 - *Let every heart prepare him room.*
 - *And heaven and nature sing.”*
- Ask:
 - How can choosing Jesus give you the gift of joy?

- What makes you most joyful when you think of Jesus? *[Make it Personal] Share your answer to this question. Consider sharing the joy you have that celebrates how Jesus came to rescue us and make a way for us to be close to God.*
- Set out scissors, prepared yarn, glue, markers, and pens.
- Give each kid a copy of the “JOY Ornament” Activity Page.
- Invite kids to write or draw something on each circle that they can celebrate about Jesus.
 - Encourage creativity, but if needed, you can suggest simple ideas such as a heart, a cross, a manger, etc.
- Guide kids through the steps at the bottom of the Activity Page to create a 3-sided ornament.
- Have each kid write their name on their ornament using a pen.
- After the ornaments are complete, allow a few minutes for kids to show one another their ornaments and share what they wrote.
- Encourage kids to take their ornaments home to celebrate Jesus who came to bring joy to the world!

Verses To Take With You

[Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

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

What You Need: Bibles

What You Do:

- Form teams of two or four kids and have them spread out in your group space.
- Give each team a Bible.
- Invite them to look up Philippians 4:4 using the Bible Navigation Tips below:

- ***Finding verses with 4th-5th graders:*** Ask kids to tell you if the book of the Bible they're looking for is in the Old Testament or New Testament. If it's in the Old, instruct kids to flip slowly, starting at the front of the Bible and heading toward the back, until they find the book they're looking for. If it's in the New, instruct kids to start flipping from the back, going forward to find the book they're looking for. Once they find the book, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. First, have them find the chapter they're looking for. Then explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Tell kids to find the verse within the chapter they've already found.
- Direct the teams to practice saying it together.
- Ask
 - Philippians 4:4 says to rejoice always or be joyful always. Does always mean *always*? Even when everything is going wrong? Explain.
 - If you're sad or discouraged at Christmas time, what can you do to help turn those feelings into the kind talked about in Philippians 4:4?
 - We celebrate God's son at Christmas! Imagine what it would be like if God hadn't sent Jesus. Name at least three things that would be different for us without Jesus.
- Ask each team to name a familiar Christmas song that is known by everyone on their team.
- Challenge teams to replace the words of the song they chose with the words of Philippians 4:4 while keeping the same melody of the original song.
- Repeat the verse again together and give them a few minutes to come up with their song.
- Once the song is complete, ask them to give it a title.
- Bring everyone together and let teams sing their newly created songs to the group.