



CHRISTMAS – DECEMBER 2024 – PRETEEN

Bible Story: *Go Tell It | Luke 2:8-20*

Key Question: *How are you celebrating Christmas this year?*

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: **How are you celebrating Christmas this year?** What’s that one Christmas tradition you look forward to every year? What’s your favorite may be different from someone else’s favorite. Through all of our various backgrounds and experiences, we have a chance to celebrate Jesus in the unique ways God has created us. We hope this question invites preteens to share the joy Jesus brings with others this Christmas season.

OPENING SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY

Just For Fun

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

What You Need: “String the Lights” Activity Page, and “Light Patterns” Activity Page

What You Do:

- Welcome kids as they arrive and invite them to place their offering in the FATW bag.
- When enough kids arrive, divide them into three or four teams.
 - Be sure there’s an even number of kids on each team.
- Have the teams sit together in front of you.
- Shuffle the cards from the “String the Lights” Activity Page.
- Give each team 20 cards and instruct them to place the cards in front of them facing down.
- Explain the rules:
 - Kids turn around as you set out a pattern of colored lights from the “Light Patterns” Activity Page.
 - As you signal, kids turn back around to observe the displayed pattern.
 - Each team races to make the same color pattern with the cards from their “String the Lights” Activity Page.
 - They must work together to make the pattern as many times as possible with their cards.
- Claim the winner by acknowledging the team that completes the pattern most times first.
 - If teams can't replicate the pattern more than once, the first team to complete it once wins.
- Repeat the steps above until you’ve used each of the cards from the “Light Patterns” Activity Page.

- If time and interest allow, consider creating your own patterns and challenge the kids to replicate a pattern by listening to the colors.

LARGE GROUP

Large Group Overview: For week 4, we continue the story in Luke 2:8-20. Jesus was born, and it was now time to announce it to the world. Instead of heading to the wealthiest people, some angels visited the shepherds and announced Jesus' birth to them first! The shepherds ran to see Jesus, and once they did, it was news they couldn't keep to themselves. Jesus is worth celebrating with everyone!

SMALL GROUP

Bible Story Extension

[Live for God | Application Activity]

Imagine: an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play and reenactment

What You Need: Bible, garland, and “Shapes of Christmas” Activity Page

What You Do:

- Divide your group into two teams and instruct them each to form a circle.
- Give each team a long strand of garland.
- Explain that you will choose one kid from each team to discreetly show them a shape from the “Shapes of Christmas” Activity Page cards.
- They will then use the garland to create an outline of that shape.
- The rest of the group will try to guess what image is being created with the garland.
- The first team to correctly guess wins.

- After each round, ask the kids if the image created reminds them of something from the Bible story. If so, take a moment to discuss how.
- Refer to Luke 2:8-20 as needed for review using the Bible.
- After all cards have been completed, discuss the story further.
 - What is the most meaningful part of the Christmas story to you?
 - How do you see God’s love in the story of Jesus’ birth?
 - The shepherds weren’t wealthy or famous people. In fact, they were not seen as very important at all. Yet, God chose them to be the FIRST to hear the good news of Jesus. What does that tell you about the way God sees people?
 - After the shepherds saw Jesus, they told everyone what they had seen! Do you think talking about Jesus with others is a form of celebration? Why or why not?
 - Christmas is a great time to share just how much God loves us. How can you do that as you celebrate with others this week?
- Remind kids that God sent Jesus because people were separated from God, but God loved the world so much and always had a plan to send us Jesus! Jesus came for everyone!
- Wrap up by reminding kids that even when we don’t feel very important, we can remember that God loves us more than we can ever imagine because God sent Jesus.

Make It Personal With Prayer

[Pray to God | Prayer Activity]

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

What You Need: “Gift Tag Prayer Prompts” Activity Page

What You Do:

- Gather your group together in a circle.
- Place the gift tags from the “Gift Tag Prayer Prompts” Activity Page face-up in the middle.

- Invite kids to choose one of the cards then focus a prayer around something that comes to mind when they think about the word on the card.
- Encourage the kids to pray silently or aloud.
- As kids wrap up their prayers, tell them to keep their gift tags and use them as a prayer prompt this week at home!
- Close your group with prayer.