



WEEK
THREE
DECEMBER 2023

SMALL GROUP

2 YEAR
-OLDS

TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

BIBLE STORY

The shepherds run to Jesus.

THE SHEPHERDS
LUKE 2:8-21

MEMORY VERSE

"God loved the world so much
that he gave his only Son."

JOHN 3:16, GNT

KEY QUESTION

How do we know
God loves us?

BOTTOM LINE

God gave us Jesus.

BASIC TRUTH

God loves me.

PRELUDE: Setting the tone for the experience

See the **Getting Ready** pages at the end of this document for a detailed description of what you'll need for today.

In the **Prelude** folder of your curriculum, you'll find a variety of other resources to help you prepare.

SMALL GROUP

15
MIN

SOCIAL: Providing time for fun interaction

Offer one or more of these activities as preschoolers arrive.

Run!

Angels in the Sky

Sheep Finders

LARGE GROUP

20
MIN

WORSHIP: Inviting people to respond to God

STORY: Communicating God's truth in engaging ways

"Silent Night"

Bible Story

Prayer

SMALL GROUP

25
MIN

GROUPS: Creating a safe place to connect

Offer as many of these activities as your time, facilities, resources, and leadership allow.

Train Whistle Verse

Run Shepherds, Run!

A Message Worth Sharing

Train Conductor Hat

HOME: Prompting action beyond the experience

Going Home

Memory Verse Card

Parent Cue Card (*print or email*)

Parent Cue App



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PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION
15 MINUTES

MADE TO MOVE

an activity that uses a preschooler's
natural desire to move
to help them learn



1. RUN!

WHAT YOU NEED: Painter's tape

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Tape a start line at one end of the activity area and a finish line at the opposite end of the activity area. Have the children stand on the start line.

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Challenge the children to run to the finish line at different speeds: super-fast, a slow jog, and slow-motion. Repeat several times.

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: Introduce the shepherds in today's Bible story and how they ran when they heard exciting news.

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: "Today, we'll do something that we don't do very much in our class. We're going to RUN today! How fun is that! Come stand at this tape line. It will be our start line. I can't wait to see how you all run!"

DURING THE ACTIVITY: "When I say, 'GO,' run as fast as you can to this line. (*Point to the finish line*). Are you ready? GO! (*Pause*.) Wow! You can run super-duper fast! Walk back to the start line. (*Pause*.) This time when I say, 'GO,' I want to see you jog. Do you know what jogging looks like? Jogging is between running fast and walking. (*Demonstrate*.) On go, jog to the finish line. Go! (*Pause*.) That was fantastic! You ran super-fast, and you jogged. Now let's try running in slow-motion. (*Demonstrate*.) Ready? Go! Run in slow-motion! (*Pause*.) That was so fun! Great job!" (*Repeat as desired*.)

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: "Today, we'll hear about some people who were shepherds. Shepherds take care of sheep. When they heard some exciting news, they ran. Do you think they ran in slow-motion or super-fast? Let's go hear our true story from the Bible to find out!"

TRANSITION: Move to Worship and Story by running in slow motion to the story area.

BIBLE STORY

The shepherds run to Jesus.

THE SHEPHERDS
LUKE 2:8-21

MEMORY VERSE

"God loved the world so much
that he gave his only Son."

JOHN 3:16, GNT

KEY QUESTION

How do we know
God loves us?

BOTTOM LINE

God gave us Jesus.

BASIC TRUTH

God loves me.



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PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION
15 MINUTES

MADE TO PLAY

an activity that encourages preschoolers to follow guidelines while having fun and learning new concepts



2. ANGELS IN THE SKY

WHAT YOU NEED: Blue butcher paper or tablecloth, white feathers, and small paper cups

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Cover the table with the butcher paper or tablecloth. Put feathers in cups, one cup per child.

BIBLE STORY

The shepherds run to Jesus.

THE SHEPHERDS
LUKE 2:8-21

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Put one feather on the table. Give each child a cup and ask them to toss or dump their cups on the table when you count to three and shout, "Glory to God in the highest." Collect the feathers and repeat as desired.

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: Introduce today's Bible story by talking about the angels and shepherds.

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: "Hello, friends! It's wonderful to see you today! Join me at the table."

DURING THE ACTIVITY: "Look at the table. The blue paper looks like the night sky. (*Put one feather on the table.*) Now what do you see? It's a feather! I have some feathers for you, too. (*Pass out the cups.*) When I count to three, I want you to toss your feathers on the table, and we'll say 'Glory to God in the highest.' Ready? One, two, three! Glory to God in the highest. Wow! Look! There are lots and lots of feathers now! The table is covered! Collect some feathers in your cup, and we'll do it again. (*Repeat as desired.*) That was so much fun!"

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: "Today in our Bible story, we'll hear more about the Christmas story when angels told the shepherds that Jesus had been born. I love the Christmas story, and I can't wait for us to hear more of it today."

MEMORY VERSE

"God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son."

JOHN 3:16, GNT

KEY QUESTION

How do we know
God loves us?

TRANSITION: Move to Worship and Story by asking the children to repeat after you as you walk. Glory (*repeat*) to God (*repeat*) in the (*repeat*) highest. (*Repeat.*)

BOTTOM LINE

God gave us Jesus.

BASIC TRUTH

God loves me.



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15 MINUTES

MADE TO EXPLORE

an activity that channels a preschooler's innate curiosity into a discussion of the week's crucial concepts



3. SHEEP FINDERS

WHAT YOU NEED: Plastic bin, cotton balls, and plastic toy sheep

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Place the cotton balls in the bin. Set the toy sheep nearby.

BIBLE STORY

The shepherds run to Jesus.

THE SHEPHERDS
LUKE 2:8-21

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Hold up the sheep, identify it, and lead the children to say "Baa, baa!" Then hide the sheep in the cotton balls, and let the children take turns finding the sheep.

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: Introduce today's Bible story by talking about a special message that angels gave to shepherds.

MEMORY VERSE

"God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son."

JOHN 3:16, GNT

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: "Friends, it's great to see you today! Gather around the table with me."

DURING THE ACTIVITY: (*Hold up the sheep.*) "This is a sheep! Sheep say, 'Baa, baa!' Say that with me. Baa, baa! I'll hide this sheep in these cotton balls. Then we'll take turns finding it. [Child's name], reach in the bin. Can you find the toy sheep? (*Pause.*) Yay! You found the sheep! (*Return the sheep to the bin and make sure it is covered with the cotton balls.*) Next friend, [child's name], can you find the toy sheep? (*Continue with each child.*) Great finding, friends."

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: "Our Bible story today is about a very special message some angels gave to shepherds while they were taking care of their sheep. I can't wait to find out what the special message is!"

KEY QUESTION

How do we know
God loves us?

TRANSITION: Move to Worship and Story by moving and baaing like sheep!

BOTTOM LINE

God gave us Jesus.

BASIC TRUTH

God loves me.



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CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO MOVE

an activity that uses a preschooler's
natural desire to move
to help them learn



1. TRAIN WHISTLE VERSE

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE REVIEW]

WHAT YOU NEED: Train whistle or train whistle sound
effect on a smartphone

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Gather the children to stand
in your activity area and review the memory verse with the
motions. Have your train whistle or sound effect ready and close.

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Encourage children to run around your activity area
(or run in place) and stop when the whistle blows. Say the verse together. Blow
the whistle again for children to continue to run. Repeat as desired.

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: Say the memory verse with the motions one more time
and review the Bottom Line.

BIBLE STORY

The shepherds run to Jesus.

THE SHEPHERDS
LUKE 2:8-21

MEMORY VERSE

"God loved the world so much
that he gave his only Son."

JOHN 3:16, GNT

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: "Friends, gather here with me! Let's stand in a circle.
Let's do the motions as we say our memory verse together. 'God (flat hand with
thumb to forehead, pull down) loved the world (cross arms over chest) so much
(pull hands away from each other) that he gave his only Son,' (rock arms like a
baby) John 3:16." (Open hands like a book.)

DURING THE ACTIVITY: "In our story today, the shepherds were running to
find Jesus. I want us to run. When you hear the train whistle (play the whistle),
I want you to stop! Let's practice. Ready? Run! (Wait then blow the whistle.)
Did you hear the whistle? That means it's time to stop and say our verse. 'God
loved the world so much that he gave his only Son,' John 3:16. (Blow the whistle.)
Everybody run! (Repeat as desired.) Wow, great job of saying your memory verse.
We stopped when we heard the train whistle, and we ran like the shepherds did."

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: "Let's say our verse one more time with the motions.
'God (flat hand with thumb to forehead, pull down) loved the world (cross arms
over chest) so much (pull hands away from each other) that he gave his only Son,'
(rock arms like a baby) John 3:16. (Open hands like a book.) Tell me friends, **how
do we know God loves us? God gave us Jesus!**"

KEY QUESTION

How do we know
God loves us?

BOTTOM LINE

God gave us Jesus.

BASIC TRUTH

God loves me.



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2. RUN SHEPHERDS, RUN!

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

WHAT YOU NEED: Several plush or plastic toy sheep, baby doll, blanket, and basket (or version of a manger); Optional large white pom-poms instead of sheep

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Wrap the doll and place it in a basket on one side of your room. Scatter the sheep all over the floor on the opposite side of the room.

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Encourage the children to stand with the sheep and run to Baby Jesus when you say, "Jesus is born!" Ask the children to go back to their sheep so they can play again. Continue playing as long as time and interest allow.

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: Talk about how the shepherds ran to see Baby Jesus when the angels said that Jesus had been born.

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: "Let's pretend we're shepherds, and these are our sheep!"

DURING THE ACTIVITY: "Our Bible story had shepherds in it. God sent angels to tell the shepherds that Jesus had been born! When the shepherds heard that Jesus had been born, they ran to Him!"

"Let's play a game! When I say, 'Jesus is born,' I want you to run to the baby in that basket. (Point to the baby in the basket.) Okay, shepherds, get ready to run! JESUS IS BORN! (Run with the children.) Look! It's Baby Jesus, just like the angels said! Yay! **God gave us Jesus!** (Clap and cheer.) Yay! **God gave us Jesus!** Let's go back to our sheep and do that again! (Repeat as time and interest allow.) That was so much fun!"

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: "We know God loves us A LOT, because **God gave us Jesus. How do we know God loves us? God gave us Jesus!**"

BIBLE STORY

The shepherds run to Jesus.

THE SHEPHERDS
LUKE 2:8-21

MEMORY VERSE

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3. A MESSAGE WORTH SHARING!

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: "People to Tell" Activity Page,
cardstock, and painter's tape or sticky tack

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Copy "People to Tell" on
cardstock, one set per small group. Tape the pictures to the
wall at preschooler eye level.

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Remind the children how the angels praised God by
saying, "Glory to God in the highest!" Point out the pictures of people on the wall.
Encourage the children to walk to one of the pictures and share that message.
Children can continue moving from one picture to the next to share this special
message. Option: Lead children out of the classroom and into the hall. Encourage
children to pretend to be the angels sharing the news about Jesus!

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: Review the Bottom Line.

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: "Friends, stand here with me! Do you remember the
angels who filled the sky and sang praises to God while the shepherds were in
the field? They said, 'Glory to God in the highest!' Can you say that with me? Glory
to God in the highest! Good job!"

DURING THE ACTIVITY: "Do you see the pictures of all the different people
around the room? I want you to pick one picture, walk over and tell the person
in the picture, 'Glory to God in the highest!' Ready? One, two, three, go! 'Glory to
God in the highest!' Great job! Now find a new person and share the message
again! Remember to say, 'Glory to God in the highest!' Nice job, everyone!"

*Option: "Let's walk down the hall together and pretend to be the angels sharing
a special message. Let's say, 'Glory to God in the highest!' together."*

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: "Yay! You shared the message with everyone! God loves
us so much because God gave Jesus to everyone! **How do we know God loves
us? God gave us Jesus!"**

BIBLE STORY

The shepherds run to Jesus.

THE SHEPHERDS
LUKE 2:8-21

MEMORY VERSE

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JOHN 3:16, GNT

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God gave us Jesus.

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HOME

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO CREATE

an activity that allows preschoolers to review the Bible story, bottom line, or memory verse by creating a craft to take home



4. TRAIN CONDUCTOR HAT

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Train Conductor Hat" Activity Page; cardstock; dot markers or washable markers; heart, angel, star, sheep, and present stickers or similar; glue sticks; sentence strips; stapler; clear tape; scissors; baby wipes; and a permanent marker

BIBLE STORY

The shepherds run to Jesus.

THE SHEPHERDS
LUKE 2:8-21

MEMORY VERSE

"God loved the world so much
that he gave his only Son."

JOHN 3:16, GNT

KEY QUESTION

How do we know
God loves us?

BOTTOM LINE

God gave us Jesus.

BASIC TRUTH

God loves me.

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Copy "Train Conductor Hat" on cardstock and cut, one per child. Write each child's name in the blank on their hat.

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Encourage children to decorate their hats with the markers and one of each sticker. Measure sentence strip around child's head and cut to length. Fold the bill of each hat up and then ask children to glue the main part of the hat to the sentence strip. Staple the ends of the sentence strip together, and then cover the back of the staple(s) with tape.

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: Review the Bible story.

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: "Friends, come choo-choo to the table together. Our Bible stories each week have been delivered on a Christmas train. Trains are fun! The person who drives a train is called a conductor, and they wear a conductor's hat. Let's make a conductor hat for you to wear today!"

DURING THE ACTIVITY: "Use the markers and stickers to decorate your conductor's hats. What stickers do you have? A heart, a sheep, a star, an angel, a present—these sound like stickers about our Bible stories! (*Measure each child's sentence strip around their head and cut as needed.*) Great job! (*Fold the bill of each child's hat up.*) Glue your hat to your sentence strip. (*Loop the ends and staple together. Cover staple ends with tape.*) This hat is ready for conductor [child's name]. (*Repeat with each child.*) You all look great in your Christmas Train conductor hats! Let's review today's Bible story."

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: "The true story of Christmas begins with a girl named Mary. God sent an angel with a special message for Mary saying that she would have a baby and that baby would be Jesus, God's Son!"



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25 MINUTES

“Then Mary and Joseph had to travel a long way to the town of Bethlehem. When they got there, they stayed in a stable full of animals and that’s where Baby Jesus was born! That night, some shepherds were out in a field with their sheep, and an angel appeared in the sky. The shepherds were so afraid, but the angel said ‘Don’t be afraid! God’s Son Jesus has been born. You will find Him in a manger!’ And then the whole sky filled with angels praising God and singing, ‘Glory to God in the highest.’ The shepherds ran fast to find Baby Jesus, and they found Him just like the angel said. Jesus, God’s Son, had been born. God loves us so much that He gave us Jesus. But that’s not the end of the Christmas story, there is more for us to learn! **How do we know God loves us? God gave us Jesus.**”



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HOME

GETTING READY

HERE'S EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW TO GET READY FOR THIS WEEK

SOCIAL: PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION (15 MINUTES)

Activities that encourage preschoolers to enter the classroom and begin engaging with peers and Small Group Leaders by providing age-appropriate and hands-on fun while introducing new concepts they will hear in the day's Bible story.

Prepare to offer one or more of the following activities as preschoolers arrive. Let one or two teachers lead activities in different areas of the room while another teacher greets parents and children at the door.

1. RUN!

Made to Move: An activity that uses a preschooler's natural desire to move to help them learn

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Painter's tape

WHAT YOU DO:

- Tape a start and a finish line on the floor across from each other in an open area.

2. ANGELS IN THE SKY

Made to Play: An activity that encourages preschoolers to follow guidelines while having fun and learning new concepts

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Blue butcher paper or tablecloth
- White feathers
- Small paper cups

WHAT YOU DO:

- Cover the table with the butcher paper or tablecloth.
- Put feathers in cups, one cup per child.

3. SHEEP FINDERS

Made to Explore: An activity that channels a preschooler's innate curiosity into a discussion of the week's crucial concepts

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Plastic bin
- Bag of cotton balls
- Toy sheep

WHAT YOU DO:

- Place the cotton balls in the bin.
- Set the toy sheep nearby.

GROUPS: CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT (25 MINUTES)

Create a safe place to connect through activities written to reach every learning style while reinforcing the Bottom Line introduced during the Bible Story and applying it to real-life experiences. In addition, these activities provide preschoolers with an opportunity to build relationships with their Small Group Leader.

Offer as many of the following activities as your time, facilities, resources, and leadership allow. You may want to lead one activity at a time. Or, offer two activities at once and allow half the children to participate in each. Then switch groups and repeat the activities.

1. TRAIN WHISTLE VERSE

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE REVIEW]

Made to Move: An activity that uses a preschooler's natural desire to move to help them learn

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Train whistle or a train whistle sound effect on a smartphone

2. RUN SHEPHERDS, RUN!

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

Made to Move: An activity that uses a preschooler's natural desire to move to help them learn

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Several plush or plastic toy sheep
- Baby doll
- Blanket
- Basket or version of a manger
- Optional large white pom-poms instead of sheep

WHAT YOU DO:

- Wrap the doll and place it in a basket on one side of your room.
- Scatter the sheep all over the floor on the opposite side of the room.



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GETTING READY

HERE'S EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW TO GET READY FOR THIS WEEK

3. A MESSAGE WORTH SHARING!

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

Made to Move: An activity that uses a preschooler's natural desire to move to help them learn

WHAT YOU NEED:

- "People to Tell" Activity Page
- Cardstock
- Painter's tape or sticky tack

WHAT YOU DO:

- Copy "People to Tell" on cardstock, one set per small group.
- Tape the pictures to the wall at preschooler eye level.

4. TRAIN CONDUCTOR HAT

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

Made to Create: An activity that allows preschoolers to review the Bible story, bottom line, or memory verse by creating a craft

WHAT YOU NEED:

- "Train Conductor Hat" Activity Page
- Cardstock
- Dot markers or washable markers
- Heart, angel, star, sheep, and present stickers or similar
- Glue sticks
- Sentence strips
- Stapler
- Clear tape
- Scissors
- Baby wipes
- Permanent marker

WHAT YOU DO:

- Copy "Train Conductor Hat" on cardstock and cut, one per child.
- Write each child's name in the blank on their hat.

HOME: PROMPTING ACTION BEYOND THE EXPERIENCE

- Make copies on cardstock or email this week's Parent Cue card.
- Copy the Memory Verse card to hand out or make available to parents.
- Copy "Going Home" and hang it on the door where Small Group Leaders can reference and remind parents of the Bottom Line and Memory Verse as parents pick up their children.
- Tell parents about our additional family resource, the **Parent Cue app**.

FIRST LOOK PINTEREST PAGE

- Visit our Pinterest page to see craft samples and suggested supplies. bit.ly/FL_ChristmasTrain