



WEEK
ONE
DECEMBER 2023

LARGE GROUP
3-5 YEAR
-OLDS
STAGE

TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

BIBLE STORY

God tells Mary she is going to have His Son, Jesus.

THE ANGEL AND MARY
LUKE 1:26-33, 38

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.

Emotion Motions!
Chilly Choo Choo
Angel Launch

LARGE GROUP

20
MIN

WORSHIP: Inviting people to respond to God

STORY: Communicating God's truth in engaging ways

"Silent Night," and "Jesus Is"
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.

Memory Verse with Motions
Message on the Move
Deliver the Message
A Special Message!
Jesus Is the Present
Journal and Prayer

HOME: Prompting action beyond the experience

Going Home
Memory Verse Card
Parent Cue Card (*print or email*)
Parent Cue App



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10 MINUTES

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LARGE GROUP

ENGAGE CHILDREN'S HEARTS THROUGH A DYNAMIC AND INTERACTIVE WORSHIP, BIBLE STORY, AND PRAYER EXPERIENCE IN A LARGE GROUP SETTING.

WORSHIP

WHAT YOU NEED: "Memory Verse Card" Activity Page; cardstock; Bible; instruments or music player; this month's worship song, "Silent Night," included in your monthly files; and "Jesus Is," available on OrangeKidsMusic.com; Optional Dance Moves Video for "Silent Night," available in the Media Package if you subscribe or from OrangeKidsMusic.com, and "Jesus Is," available from OrangeKidsMusic.com

WORSHIP LEADER: "Hello, friends! My name is [your name], and I'm so glad to see you! It's almost Christmas! Christmas is when we celebrate that God gave us Jesus. And God gave us Jesus to show us how much God loves us! When I ask, '**How do we know God loves us?**', you say, '**God gave us Jesus!**' **How do we know God loves us?**"

CHILDREN AND WORSHIP LEADER: "**God gave us Jesus!**"

WORSHIP LEADER: "That's right! God gave us Jesus on that first Christmas. Let's sing this together.

Lead children in singing "Silent Night," this month's worship song.

"I love worshipping with you, friends! Tell me, **how do we know God loves us?**"

CHILDREN AND WORSHIP LEADER: "**God gave us Jesus.**"

WORSHIP LEADER: "That's right! **God gave us Jesus!** The Bible teaches us that '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.*) Let's learn the verse together! Watch me do the motions, then you can do it with me!

*"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.*)"*

Repeat the verse and the motions with the children.

"Great job! I'm SO glad God gave us Jesus. That's what Christmas is all about! **How do we know God loves us?**"



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CHILDREN AND WORSHIP LEADER: "God gave us Jesus."

WORSHIP LEADER: "Yes, **God gave us Jesus!** God loves us so much that He gave us Jesus. Sing this out with me.

Lead children in singing "Jesus Is."

"Thanks for worshipping with me today, friends. Remember, God loves us so much that **God gave us Jesus!**
[Transition] And now it's time to turn around, sit down, and shake the wiggles out (*wiggle hands*) so we can hear (*cup hands behind ears*) what the story's all about!"

INTRO SKETCH

WHAT YOU NEED: Large box, ribbon or duct tape; colorful painter's tape or butcher paper; construction paper; aluminum pie pan; hot glue gun; three large plush animals; train whistle; and fun Christmas sweater, headband, or necklace

NOTE: The Host will wear the fun Christmas attire with train costume and use a train whistle all month.

Preset the three plush animals and Christmas story train in the storytelling area.

Host enters, wearing a Christmas sweater and cardboard train, as Worship Leader exits.

HOST: "Hi, friends! Welcome to [your environment's name or story time]! My name is [your name]. Do you know what special day is coming? (*Pause.*) My [sweater, headband, necklace] should give you a hint. Shout it out if you know what special day is coming! (*Pause.*) Yes! It's almost Christmas!"

"And this (*gesture to train*) is our Christmas story train. Raise your hand if you like trains. (*Look for response.*) Me, too! Today, I want to pretend to be a train and deliver a special Christmas message to my plush friends. Do you want to help me? (*Listen for response.*) Great!"

"When I blow my train whistle (*hold up train whistle*), I want you to move your arms like this. (*Move arms like a train: bend arms at elbows move in a circle.*) Then say 'Chugga-chugga, chugga-chugga, chugga-chugga, chugga-chugga (*pull hand down*) Choo-choo!' Let's practice. Ready?"

Blow train whistle.

CHILDREN AND HOST: (*Move arms like a train.*) "Chugga-chugga, chugga-chugga, chugga-chugga, chugga-chugga (*pull hand down*) Choo-choo!"

HOST: Great job! Let's get this Christmas train moving! Ready?

Blow train whistle, and as you say the next line, move to the first plush animal.

CHILDREN AND HOST: (*Move arms like a train.*) "Chugga-chugga, chugga-chugga, chugga-chugga, chugga-chugga . . . (*pull hand down*) Choo-choo!"

Pick up plush animal or bend down to it.



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HOST: (to plush animal) "Hello, Mr./Miss [name of first animal]. We have a special Christmas message for you. (to children) On the count of three say, 'Merry Christmas!' One, two, three."

CHILDREN AND HOST: "Merry Christmas!"

HOST: "Great job! Bye, Mr./Miss [name of first animal]! It's time to move along. Here we go!"

Set down plush animal and blow train whistle. As you say the next line, move to the second plush animal.

CHILDREN AND HOST: (Move arms like a train.) "Chugga-chugga, chugga-chugga, chugga-chugga, chugga-chugga (pull hand down) Choo-choo!"

Pick up plush animal or bend down to it.

HOST: "Hi, Mr./Miss [name of second animal]! We have a special message for you. (to children) Say it with me."

CHILDREN AND HOST: "Merry Christmas!"

HOST: "Bye, Mr./Miss [name of second animal]! It's time to move along. Here we go!"

Set down plush animal and blow train whistle. As you say the next line, move to the third plush animal.

CHILDREN AND HOST: (Move arms like a train.) "Chugga-chugga, chugga-chugga, chugga-chugga, chugga-chugga (pull hand down) Choo-choo!"

HOST: "Hi, Mr./Miss [name of third animal]! We have a special message for you. (to children) Say it with me."

CHILDREN AND HOST: "Merry Christmas!"

HOST: "Bye, Mr./Miss [name of third animal]! It's time for us to go back to the train station. (to children) Here we go!"

Set down plush animal and blow train whistle. As you say the next line, move to center of storytelling area.

CHILDREN AND HOST: (Move arms like a train.) "Chugga-chugga, chugga-chugga, chugga-chugga, chugga-chugga (pull hand down) Choo-choo!"

HOST: "That was fun! Thank you for making the train sounds with me and helping me say the special message to my animal friends."

"Today, our Bible story is about a very, VERY special message! I can't wait for you to hear it! Bye!"



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10 MINUTES

Storyteller enters as Host exits with the train whistle, leaving the Christmas story train and plush animals.

STORY

WHAT YOU NEED: "Angel and Mary" Activity Page; cardstock; cardboard boxes; brightly colored butcher paper or wrapping paper in a variety of colors; construction paper; large envelope; fun stickers; marker; toy phone or smartphone; angel wings; bowl; confetti or tissue paper squares; train engineer costume; train whistle; scissors; glue; packaging tape; and Bible; Optional spray paint or paint and paintbrushes; *Optional Story Images* and cardstock

Preset the Christmas story train in the storytelling area.

Storyteller enters as Host exits. Storyteller is dressed like a train engineer and carries a train whistle and Bible.

STORYTELLER: "Hello, friends! I'm [your name], and I can't wait to tell you a true story from the Bible.

Open Bible for children to see, then set it down.

"And our Christmas train will help us learn all about the true story of Christmas! Are you ready for a story? (Listen for response.) Fantastic! When I blow my whistle, I want everyone to say, 'ALL ABOARD!' Get ready!"

Blow train whistle.

CHILDREN AND STORYTELLER: "ALL ABOARD!"

Kneel next to the Angel and Mary train car.

STORYTELLER: "The true story of Christmas begins with a young girl named Mary.

Point to Mary in the picture on the train car.

(Option: Display Story Image W1 01)

"God had an important message for Mary. How do you think God gave Mary the important message? Did God . . .

Pick up envelope from train car and show children.

"Send a letter? (Pause for response.) No!

Put envelope away and pick up phone from train car.

"Did God call Mary on the phone? (Pause for response, then laugh.) No, God gave Mary an important message by sending an angel!

Pick up and put on angel wings.



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10 MINUTES

"The angel gave Mary a VERY important message.

(Option: Display Story Image W1 02)

"Mary was surprised and a little afraid when she saw the angel. But the angel said, 'Do not be afraid, Mary! God says you are going to have a baby and you will call Him Jesus.'

"WOW! That IS a very important message!

(Option: Display Story Image W1 03)

"Mary was going to have a baby! And not just any baby. Mary was going to have Jesus! (Pause.) Jesus is special because Jesus is God's Son!

Pick up confetti from train car and throw in the air.

"Hooray for Jesus! God loves us SO much that God gave us His Son, Jesus. That is A LOT of love! So when I ask, '**How do we know God loves us?**', I want you to say, '**God gave us Jesus!**' Let's try that! **How do we know God loves us?**'"

CHILDREN AND STORYTELLER: "God gave us Jesus!"

STORYTELLER: "Again! How do we know God loves us?"

CHILDREN AND STORYTELLER: "God gave us Jesus!"

STORYTELLER: "Yay! God gave us Jesus! [Transition] Our story time is over (*pick up and close Bible*), but we're not through. Let's talk to God because God loves you!"

PRAYER

STORYTELLER: "Dear God, Thank You that we can read the true story of Christmas in the Bible. Thank You for loving us so much that You gave us Your Son, Jesus. We love You, God. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

"Come back next time to hear more about the true story of Christmas. See you next time! Bye!"

Host enters as Storyteller exits, carrying train whistle and Bible.



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OUTRO SKETCH

WHAT YOU NEED: No supplies needed

Host enters as Storyteller exits.

HOST: "Wow! God sent an angel to tell Mary that she would have God's Son, Jesus! God loves us so much that He gave us Jesus!"

"I think I (*point to self*) got the story. Did you (*point to children*) get it? If you did, say, 'Got it!' Get it?" (*Cup one hand behind ear.*)

CHILDREN AND HOST: "Got it!"

HOST: (*Give two thumbs-up.*) "Good! I have a new message to share with my animal friends. This message is **God gave us Jesus!** Who gave us Jesus?"

CHILDREN AND HOST: "**God gave us Jesus!**"

HOST: "Yes, **God gave us Jesus!** [Transition] And now it's time for more Bible fun. There's more to learn. Come on, everyone!"

Host dismisses small groups and exits.



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GETTING READY

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

Gather children for a Large Group time that includes interactive worship, the introductory sketch, and the Bible story. The Stage Script is written for those who gather their preschoolers together from multiple rooms and have a larger space on which to present the Bible story. If you are pulling your children to a rug on one side of your preschool space, you may benefit from using the Rug Script.

WORSHIP: INVITING PEOPLE TO RESPOND TO GOD (10 MINUTES)

A Worship Leader and live instruments are recommended to sing along with the music tracks. Encourage children to be active during worship by incorporating the appropriate hand motions.

STORY: COMMUNICATING GOD'S TRUTH IN ENGAGING WAYS (10 MINUTES)

Choose an adult or teenager who relates well to preschoolers to tell the Introductory Sketch. If possible, use the same person for an entire month, as the Host role stays the same each month.

Choose an engaging adult to tell the Bible story. This person should be able to command the attention of preschoolers and control the group through animated storytelling. These scripts are written to be "told" and not "read." Advanced preparation is necessary.

1. WORSHIP

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Leader(s)
- Instruments or music player
- "Memory Verse Card" Activity Page
- Cardstock
- Scissors
- Bible

MUSIC AND SOUND EFFECTS:

- This month's worship song, "Silent Night," included in your monthly files
- "Jesus Is," available on OrangeKidsMusic.com

OPTIONAL VIDEOS (AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE):

- Dance Moves Music Video for "Silent Night," available in the Media Package if you subscribe or from OrangeKidsMusic.com

- Dance Moves Music Video for "Jesus Is," available from OrangeKidsMusic.com

WHAT YOU DO:

- Copy "Memory Verse Card" on cardstock and cut apart.
- Place "Memory Verse Card" in Bible at John 3:16.
- Download all songs available on OrangeKidsMusic.com and have them ready to use.

2. INTRO/OUTRO SKETCH

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Large box (It needs to be big enough for Host to wear.)
- Ribbon or duct tape
- Aluminum pie tin
- Hot glue gun
- Colorful tape
- Construction paper in a variety of colors
- Three large plush animals
- Train whistle
- Fun Christmas apparel
- Scissors

WHAT YOU DO:

- Make a cardboard train costume that the Host can wear.
 - Cut off all the flaps (top and bottom) of the cardboard box.
 - Make straps out of ribbon or duct tape folded over itself.
 - To make the headlight, hot glue the pie tin to the front of the box.
 - Decorate the box with strips of colorful tape.
 - To make wheels cut out six circles of construction paper, and glue three to each side.
- NOTE: Save the train for the rest of the month.



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3. BIBLE STORY

WHAT YOU NEED:

- "Angel and Mary" Activity Page
 - New images will be added each week to the story train. Activity Pages for individual weeks can be found in each week's folder.
- Cardstock
- Cardboard boxes – Recycle cardboard boxes of different shapes and sizes to make a train. See an example here: bit.ly/44U6BjS. In our example, we used the following sizes:
 - Medium boxes, 15" x 12" x 10" (bit.ly/3w5uQfz)—one for train engine and one for first car
 - NOTE: You will need seven total for the month.
 - Small box, 11" x 7.5" x 5.5" (bit.ly/43KQ5j)—one for the top of the train engine
 - Oatmeal canister or Pringles® can for the smokestack
- Brightly colored butcher paper or wrapping paper in a variety of colors
- Construction paper for train wheels, smokestack, and headlight
- Large envelope
- Fun stickers
- Toy phone or smartphone
- Angel wings
- Bowl
- Confetti or tissue paper squares
- Tinsel garland
- Scissors
- Packaging tape
- Train whistle
- Train engineer costume (*striped overalls, red bandana, hat, etc.*)
- Bible
- Optional cardstock

LARGE GROUP VISUALS:

- Story Image W1 01
- Story Image W1 02
- Story Image W1 03

WHAT YOU DO:

- Copy "Angel and Mary" on cardstock and cut off copying directions.
- To make the train engine:
 - Assemble one medium box (15" x 12" x 10") and one small box (11" x 7.5" x 5.5").
 - Wrap with brightly colored paper.
 - Place the smaller box on top of the medium box, flush against back edge, and secure with packaging tape.
 - To make the smokestack, cover an oatmeal canister with construction paper, and add to the top of the medium box. Secure with packaging tape.
 - To make wheels, cut two circles out of construction paper and tape onto medium box in the bottom corners. Option: Cut four circles to put wheels on both sides of train.
 - To make headlight, cut one large circle out of construction paper and tape onto the front of medium box.
- To make the "Angel and Mary" train car:
 - Assemble one medium box and tuck the top flaps inside the box, leaving the box open on top.
 - Secure flaps with packaging tape, if needed.
 - Wrap with brightly colored butcher paper.
 - Option: If boxes do not have markings or if you use brown kraft paper, consider taping a large piece of construction paper behind Activity Page.
 - Add wheels by cutting two circles out of construction paper and taping onto medium box near the bottom corners.
 - Tape "Angel and Mary" picture onto the train car.
- Cut small holes near the bottom of the short sides of boxes, but not the front of the engine.
- Cut a short section of tinsel and thread through the first hole to connect the train engine to the "Angel and Mary" train car. Secure with packaging tape.
- Decorate envelope with fun stickers.
- Place confetti in bowl.
- Put decorated envelope, toy phone, angel wings, and bowl of confetti in train car.
- Storyteller wears costume and carries train whistle and Bible.
- Option: Copy the *Optional Story Images* on cardstock or download them to display on a screen.
- NOTE: Save train whistle, engineer costume, train engine, and train cars for future weeks.



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SUPPLEMENTAL RESOURCES

WONDER, LOOK AT GOD'S STORY: First Look offers weekly introductory sketches and Bible stories on the DVD titled "Wonder, Look at God's Story." This DVD is available for purchase at OrangeStore.org or as part of your monthly Media Package.

MONTHLY WIDGET*: CHRISTMAS TRAIN PUZZLE

This month, we offer a unique item that helps kids and families apply what they're learning at home. Available at Store.ThinkOrange.com.

***WIDG-ET [WIJ-IT]** -noun

1. Something unspecific whose name is either forgotten or not known.
2. A device that is very useful for a particular job
Origin: 1925-30; perhaps an alternative form of gadget

FIRST LOOK PINTEREST PAGE

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