



WEEK
THREE
DECEMBER 2023

SMALL GROUP
3-5 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.

Moving Down the Track

Maze of the Shepherd

Gathering Sheep 

LARGE GROUP

20
MIN

WORSHIP: Inviting people to respond to God

STORY: Communicating God's truth in engaging ways

"Silent Night," and "Happy Birthday Jesus"

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.

Christmas Ornament

Story Train 

Which One Is It?

Find Baby Jesus

Stand Up Train

Journal and Prayer

HOME: Prompting action beyond the experience

Going Home

Memory Verse Card

Parent Cue Card (*print or email*)

Parent Cue App



This symbol indicates an activity with potential allergens. Be sure to post allergy alert sign and inform parents at drop-off.



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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. MOVING DOWN THE TRACKS

WHAT YOU NEED: Painter's tape or train track tape

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Create a large set of train tracks on the floor using painter's tape or adhere train track tape to the floor. Stand at one end of the tracks, and ask children

to stand single file at the opposite end.

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Call out a different way for the children to move (*run, crawl, roll, skip, tiptoe, big elephant steps, tiny baby steps, sidestep*) along the track, one at a time, to reach you at the end. Once all children complete the first round, move to the opposite end from the children and call out a different way to move. Continue as time and interest allow.

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: Introduce today's Bible story by talking about the first people to hear about Jesus' birth.

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: "Friends, line up here, one behind each other. What do you see? (Pause.) Yes! These look like train tracks. Let's move down the track, one at a time! Listen for me to tell you how to move each time."

DURING THE ACTIVITY: "Let's go, one friend at a time, and move that way down the track by (*name an action*)! [Child's name], you go first and run down the track to me! Remember, let's go one friend at a time so everyone has a turn. (Continue with each child. Then move to the opposite end of the tracks.) You stay there, and I'll move to the other end. Ready? [Child's name], (*name an action*) down the tracks to me. (Continue with each child. Repeat as desired.) That was SO fun!"

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: "We're having fun this month on our Christmas train, learning all about how God gave us Jesus! On Christmas, God gave us Jesus to show us just how much He loves us! And today, we'll find out about the first people to hear the news about Jesus' birth. Come with me!"

TRANSITION: Move to Worship and Story by continuing to move down the train tracks like in the activity.

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. SHEPHERD MAZE

WHAT YOU NEED: "Maze of the Shepherd" Activity Page; Avery® #6450 labels or equivalent; ping-pong balls; box lids; craft tubes; and a hot glue gun; *Optional Nativity stickers in place of the "Maze of the Shepherd" Activity Page and Avery® #6450 labels or equivalent*

NOTE: Use the hot glue gun before children arrive and store it in another room, out of reach.

BIBLE STORY

The shepherds run to Jesus.

THE SHEPHERDS
LUKE 2:8-21

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Copy "Maze of the Shepherd" on label paper, three sets per small group. Place the shepherd stickers on three ping-pong balls. For each small group, make three mazes by gluing the craft tubes to the inside of the lids. Place a manger sticker on one of the tubes, this can be different on each maze if desired.

MEMORY VERSE

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

JOHN 3:16, GNT

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Encourage children to move the box lid back and forth to move the ball. The goal is to get the shepherds to the manger. Make sure each child gets a turn.

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: Introduce the shepherds from today's Bible story who traveled to see Baby Jesus.

KEY QUESTION

How do we know
God loves us?

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: "Friends, it's so great to see you all today! Come over here, and let's play a game!"

DURING THE ACTIVITY: "To play the game, you need to move this ball through the tubes and into this special one. The ball has a picture of a shepherd on it. What picture is on this tube? (Pause.) Baby Jesus! That's right! Move the box back and forth gently to make the ball move in and out of the tubes. (Pause.) Great job! (Make sure each child gets a turn.) That was fun, moving the shepherd to Baby Jesus."

BOTTOM LINE

God gave us Jesus.

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: "Today in our Bible story, we'll hear a story about some shepherds who went to see Baby Jesus after He was born!"

BASIC TRUTH

God loves me.

TRANSITION: Move to Worship and Story by pretending to be shepherds, herding your sheep as you move to your designated area.



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15 MINUTES

MADE TO IMAGINE

an activity that lets preschoolers pretend, imagine, and role play to enhance their learning



3. GATHERING SHEEP*

WHAT YOU NEED: Cotton balls or white pom-poms and plastic decorative candy canes; *Optional "Allergy Alert Poster," cardstock, and regular-size candy canes*

**Be sure to list the items you will be using today on the "Allergy Alert Poster" (in the Prelude folder) and post it at the door to your room.*

BIBLE STORY

The shepherds run to Jesus.

THE SHEPHERDS
LUKE 2:8-21

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Scatter the cotton balls/pom-poms around the activity area. *Option: Copy "Allergy Alert Poster" on cardstock, list candy canes, and post at the door.*

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Give each child a candy cane or if you have more children than candy canes, encourage children to gather two sheep then pass the cane to another child and repeat until each child has a turn. Encourage children to pretend to be a shepherd and use the candy cane as a "staff" to gather the "sheep." Gather all the sheep into the center of the activity area.

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: Introduce the Bible story and the shepherds that heard the special news.

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: "Friends, join me over here. Look at all these white cotton balls. Let's pretend they're sheep and we are shepherds. Shepherds have staffs that help direct and gather their sheep. (*Hold up candy cane.*) What does this candy cane look like? It kind of looks like a shepherd staff. We will use these as our staffs to gather sheep."

DURING THE ACTIVITY: "Okay, shepherds! Let's go gather the sheep. Be gentle and kind and try to get your sheep over here in the middle of our area. (*Pause.*) Wow you are good shepherds! Some of those sheep are tricky. Keep trying to gather them with your staff. (*Once the sheep are gathered, scatter again. Repeat as desired.*) That was so fun! You did a great job of being shepherds!"

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: "In our story today, we will hear about real shepherds who got some amazing news while they were in the field taking care of their sheep."

TRANSITION: Move to Worship and Story by pretending to be sheep.

MEMORY VERSE

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JOHN 3:16, GNT

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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



1. CHRISTMAS ORNAMENT

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE REVIEW]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Christmas Ornament" Activity Page, cardstock, crayons, blue and green tissue paper squares, glue sticks, scissors, hole punch, ribbon or yarn, and a pen

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Copy "Christmas Ornament" on cardstock and cut, one per child. Cut ribbon or yarn into eight-inch lengths, one per child. Hole punch at the top of each ornament and write each child's name on their paper. Thread a length of yarn in the hole of each child's ornament and tie a knot. Say the memory verse together with the motions.

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Encourage children to color Baby Jesus then flip over and have children glue blue and green tissue paper to resemble the world.

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: Say the memory verse as you do the motions, one more time, and review the Bottom Line.

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: "Friends, let's say our memory verse together as we do the motions. Ready? '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.*) Nice job!"

DURING THE ACTIVITY: "Who do you see on your ornament? (*Pause.*) Baby Jesus! Color Baby Jesus. (*Pause.*) Great! Now flip your ornament over. On this side, glue the blue and green tissue squares to look like the world. (*Pause.*) Nice job! Let's say our memory verse together. 'God loved the world (*hold up the world side of a child's ornament*) so much that he gave his only Son,' John 3:16 (*Turn the ornament over to the side with Baby Jesus.*) Your ornaments look amazing!"

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: "Let's say our verse together, 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.*) God loves us so much that God gave us His Son, Jesus! **How do we know God loves us? God gave us Jesus."**

BIBLE STORY

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MADE TO PLAY

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



2. STORY TRAIN*

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Allergy Alert Poster," "Story Train Pictures" Activity Page, cardstock, scissors, craft sticks, masking tape, Play-Doh®, toy train tracks, and train cars; *Optional printable tracks from Environmental Art in Prelude folder in place of toy train tracks*

**Be sure to list the items you will be using today on the "Allergy Alert Poster" (in the Prelude folder) and post it at the door to your room.*

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Copy "Allergy Alert Poster" on cardstock, list Play-Doh, and post at the door. Copy "Story Train Pictures" on cardstock and cut, one set per small group. Tape each story train picture to the end of a craft stick.

Option: Copy track images from Environment Art on cardstock.

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Invite the children to make train tracks with you. Stick each story train picture craft stick in a pot of Play-Doh so it will stand on the floor (*like a road sign*). Add the story train pictures to the side of the train tracks, in order as they happened in the story. Choose a child to drive the train around the track and stop at the first story picture so you can review that part of the Bible story. Choose another child to drive to the second story picture and so on. Continue the activity until every child has had at least one turn driving the train. While one child is driving the train, encourage the other children to make a chugga-chugga, choo-choo train sound."

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: Talk about how the shepherds ran to see the good news that **God gave us Jesus!**

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: "Friends, come over here and look at all these things I have for us to retell today's story."

DURING THE ACTIVITY: "Look at these train track pieces. We need to build a train track. Will you help me? (*Encourage children to work together to build the train track.*) Thank you for helping me make this train track. I have these story pictures from our Bible story that we can put along the tracks. Let's take turns driving the train. [Child's name], you can be the first train conductor. Everyone else make the train sound with me until it's your turn to drive the train. Here we go! Chugga-chugga, choo-choo! (*Stop at story picture #1.*) In the true story of Christmas, God sent an angel to tell Mary that she would have His Son, Jesus.

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CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

“Okay, [child’s name] drive the train to the next picture. (Stop at story picture #2.) Mary and Joseph had to go to Bethlehem. They stayed in a room where animals stayed because there were no other rooms. When Jesus was born, Mary wrapped Him in cloths and laid Him in a manger to sleep.

“Okay, [child’s name] drive the train to the next picture. (Stop at story picture #3.) Angels told shepherds out in a field that Baby Jesus had been born. The angels praised God and said, ‘Glory to God in the highest!’

“[Child’s name] drive the train to the last picture. (Stop at story picture #4.) The shepherds ran to see Baby Jesus, and they found Him in a manger, just like the angels said they would.” (Continue until each child has a turn driving the train.)

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: “Christmas is when we celebrate the good news that God loves us so much, God gave us Jesus! **How do we know God loves us? God gave us Jesus!**”



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CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO THINK

an advanced activity specifically
designed for older preschoolers



3. WHICH ONE IS IT?

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Which One Is It?" Activity Page,
cardstock, and dot markers

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Copy "Which One Is It?" on
cardstock, one per child. Set the pages and dot markers on

the table.

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Point out the train cars on their paper. Lead the
children to point to the first train car on the page. Ask the children a question
from the dialogue below and invite them to dot marker over the correct picture.
Repeat with the remaining train cars using the questions below. Make sure each
child's name is on their page and set aside to dry.

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: Review the Bible story and remind the children that
God gave us Jesus because He loves us!

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: "Friends, come find a spot at the table!"

DURING THE ACTIVITY: "What do you see on your paper? (Pause.) Train cars!
That's right. Everyone, point to the first train car. (Pause.) Great job! Where did
Mary and Joseph stay? Did they stay in a castle, a bed, or a stable? (Pause.) A
stable! Dot marker over the stable. Great job.

"Now, point to the next train car. (Pause.) That's it, good job. Where did the angel
appear? Did the angel appear in the sky, in an airplane, or in a race car? (Pause.)
The angel appeared in the sky! Great job. Dot marker over the sky.

"Let's move on to the next train car. What happened in the stable? Was a sheep,
Baby Jesus, or a cow born in the stable? (Pause.) Of course! Baby Jesus was born
in the stable! We celebrate Jesus' birth at Christmas. Dot marker over Baby Jesus.
Good job, friends.

"Okay, now point to the last car. Where did the shepherds run to find Baby Jesus?
Did they run to a manger—which is a feeding trough for animals—a grocery store,
or a playground? (Pause.) A manger! Let's dot marker over the manger. Way to
go, everyone!"

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: "Mary and Joseph found a place to stay. It was a
stable. And right there, surrounded by animals, Baby Jesus was born. An angel
appeared in the sky to a group of shepherds to tell them the BIG news! When they
heard about Baby Jesus, those shepherds ran 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 God gave us Jesus! **How do we know God loves us? God gave
us Jesus! One more time. 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

"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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25 MINUTES

MADE TO MOVE

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



4. FIND BABY JESUS

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Find Baby Jesus" Activity Page,
cardstock, scissors, and painter's tape

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Copy "Find Baby Jesus" on
cardstock, one set per small group. Tape the pictures of

places around the room at child's height, making sure to only tape at the top of
each paper. Tape the picture of Baby Jesus under the stable picture.

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Encourage children to go to the different pictures
and look under them to find Baby Jesus. Repeat as desired.

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: Review the Bible story.

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: "Friends, let's pretend we're the shepherds from our
Bible story today. There are a lot of places for us to look for Baby Jesus. Do you
see all the places around the room? (Pause.) Will you help me find Baby Jesus?
Great!"

DURING THE ACTIVITY: "Do you see a picture of the fire station? Let's hop to
the fire station. (Pause.) Is Baby Jesus at the fire station? (Lift the paper up.) No.
Baby Jesus isn't at the fire station. Maybe He's at the playground! Let's go look
there. March with me. (Pause.) Is Baby Jesus at the playground? (Lift the paper
up.) No. Baby Jesus isn't at the playground. Oh! A castle! Maybe Baby Jesus is at
the castle! Let's crawl to the castle. (Pause.) Is Baby Jesus at the castle? (Lift the
paper up.) No. Baby Jesus isn't at the castle. Hmm . . . where could Baby Jesus
be? Where did the angel tell the shepherds they could find Baby Jesus? (Pause.)
The angels told the shepherds they would find Baby Jesus in a stable! Do you see
a picture of a stable? (Pause.) Let's run to the stable! (Pause.) Is Baby Jesus in the
stable? (Lift the paper up.) Yes! Baby Jesus is in the stable, laying on the hay in a
manger! We found Jesus! Hooray!"

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: "In our Bible story, the shepherds were in a field, taking
care of their sheep when an angel appeared in the sky with a bright light shining
all around. The shepherds were afraid, but the angel said 'Don't be afraid! God's
Son, Jesus, has been born. You will find Him in a manger!' And suddenly the whole
sky filled with angels praising God and singing 'Glory to God in the highest!' The
shepherds ran super 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 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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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



5. STAND UP TRAIN

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Stand Up Train" and "Stand Up Train Sticker" Activity Pages; cardstock; Avery® #5294 labels or equivalent; craft tubes; crayons or washable markers; scissors; craft knife; and a permanent marker

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Copy "Stand Up Train" on cardstock and cut, one per child. Write each child's name on their paper. Copy "Stand Up Train Sticker" on label paper, one per child. Cut craft tubes into 1½" sections, two per child. Cut a ½" slit down the center of each tube section.

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Encourage children to decorate their train cutout and add the sticker. If desired, have children color the train wheels. Leader helps slide the train into the slits in the three tube sections.

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: Review the Bible story.

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: "Friends, come sit with me at the table. I have something very special for you to make today."

DURING THE ACTIVITY: "You're going to make your very own Christmas Train! Hooray! Color your train. (Pause.) Super! I have a sticker for you to add to your train. It has our memory verse written on it. Let's say our verse together. 'God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son,' John 3:16. Nice job! Your train needs wheels. We can use these tube pieces for the wheels. You can keep them like this, or you can color them. (Pause.) Find the slits on each of the pieces, and we'll slide your train into them. (Help as needed.) Your trains look amazing!"

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: "The Christmas story begins with a girl named Mary. God sent an angel with a special message for her. The angel said that Mary would have a baby and that baby would be Jesus, God's Son! Then Mary and Joseph had to travel a long way to the town of Bethlehem. When Mary and Joseph got there, they stayed in a stable full of animals. Then . . . Baby Jesus was born!"

"That night, some shepherds were out in a field taking care of sheep when an angel appeared in the sky! There was a bright light shining all around. They were afraid! But the angel said, 'Don't be afraid! God's Son, Jesus, has been born. You will find Him in a manger!' Then the whole sky filled with angels praising God and singing, 'Glory to God in the highest!' The shepherds ran to find Jesus. They found Baby Jesus, just like the angel said. Jesus, God's Son, had been born. God loves us so much that 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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CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO REFLECT

an activity that encourages personal application and prayer



6. JOURNAL AND PRAYER

[PRAY TO GOD | PRAYER ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Memory Verse Card" from Week One in Bible, journal, and fun-shaped pen

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: If you do not have the "Memory Verse Card" in your Bible, copy "Memory Verse Card" on cardstock and cut, one per small group. Place one card in your Bible at John 3:16. Keep this card in your Bible all month.

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Lead the children to pretend to be sheep as you go to your Small Group spot. Sit down and gather the children around you. Review the memory verse and motions, then encourage the children to help you make a list of people they can tell the good news about Jesus.

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: Pray with the children using the list you made in the journal.

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: "It's Small Group time! Today, I'll pretend to be a shepherd, and you can pretend to be my sheep. What does a sheep say? (Pause.) Yes! That means you'll say, 'Baa-baa-baa' all the way to our Small Group spot. Come on little sheep! Follow me! (Pretend to be a shepherd while the children pretend to be sheep as you walk to your Small Group spot.) We made it, little sheep! Now we can sit down and talk about today's Bible story. One, two, three, sit down with me!"

DURING THE ACTIVITY: (Open the Bible and lay it in front of the children.) "In our Bible story today, God sent angels to some shepherds to tell them the good news about Jesus! Do you remember what a shepherd takes care of? (Pause.) Yes, shepherds take care of sheep. What was the good news the angels told the shepherds? (Pause.) You got it! The angels told the shepherds that Jesus had been born! When the shepherds heard about Jesus, they ran to see Him. Then they ran to go tell everyone the good news that **God gave us Jesus!**"

"We have been learning a Bible verse about how **God gave us Jesus.** It says, '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 stand up and say that Bible verse together! Just say what I say and do what I do. '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.)"

BIBLE STORY

The shepherds run to Jesus.

THE SHEPHERDS
LUKE 2:8-21

MEMORY VERSE

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CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

(6. JOURNAL AND PRAYER, CONTINUED)

"Yay! God loves us! **God gave us Jesus!** Now let's sit down so we can write in our prayer journal and talk to God. (*Open journal.*) The shepherds were so excited that **God gave us Jesus** that they ran and told everyone the good news! Let's make a list of people we can tell the good news about Jesus. When I say your name, tell me one person you can tell that **God gave us Jesus**. I'll write it in our prayer journal." (*Remember to print as you write in the journal so the children can recognize their names and the letters.*)

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: "Thank you for making this list. Would anyone like to pray before I pray? (*Give each child who wants to pray the opportunity to do so.*)

"Dear God, we want everyone to hear the good news that You gave us Jesus. Please help [child's name] tell [name they listed], and [child's name] tell [name they listed] . . . (*continue with each child and who they listed*). We want everyone to know that Christmas is about You loving us so much that You gave us Your one and only Son, Jesus. We love You, God! In Jesus' name, amen."



WEEK
THREE
DECEMBER 2023

SMALL GROUP
3-5 YEAR-OLDS

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

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. MOVING DOWN THE TRACK

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

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Painter's tape or train track tape like this: pin.it/4e86K89

WHAT YOU DO:

- Tape a large set of train tracks on the floor of your activity area or adhere train track tape to the floor.

2. MAZE OF THE SHEPHERD

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

WHAT YOU NEED:

- "Maze of the Shepherd" Activity Page
- Avery® #6450 labels or equivalent
- Three ping-pong balls
- Three box lids
- Nine craft tubes
- Hot glue gun

WHAT YOU DO:

- Copy "Maze of the Shepherd" on label paper, three sets per small group.
- Place a shepherd sticker on each ping-pong ball.
- For each small group, make three mazes by gluing the craft tubes to the inside of the lids.
- Place a manger sticker on one of the tubes in each maze, this can be different on each maze if desired.

3. GATHERING SHEEP

Made to Imagine: An activity that lets preschoolers pretend, imagine, and role play to enhance their learning

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Cotton balls or white pom-poms
- Plastic, decorative candy canes
- Optional "Allergy Alert Poster," cardstock, and regular-size candy canes

WHAT YOU DO:

- Scatter the cotton balls or pom-poms around the activity area.
- Option: Copy "Allergy Alert Poster" on cardstock, list candy canes, and post at the door.

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. CHRISTMAS ORNAMENT

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE REVIEW]

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

WHAT YOU NEED:

- "Christmas Ornament" Activity Page
- Cardstock
- Crayons
- Blue and green tissue paper squares
- Glue sticks
- Scissors
- Hole punch
- Ribbon or yarn
- Pen



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WHAT YOU DO:

- Copy "Christmas Ornament" on cardstock and cut, one per child.
- Cut ribbon or yarn in 8-inch lengths, one per child.
- Hole punch at the top of each ornament and write each child's name on their paper.
- Thread a length of yarn in the hole of each child's ornament and tie a knot.

2. STORY TRAIN*

[LIVE FOR GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

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

WHAT YOU NEED:

- "Allergy Alert Poster"
- "Story Train Pictures" Activity Page
- Cardstock
- Scissors
- Craft sticks
- Play-Doh®
- Toy train tracks
- Train cars

WHAT YOU DO:

- Copy "Allergy Alert Poster" on cardstock, list Play-Doh, and post at the door.
- Copy "Story Train Pictures" on cardstock and cut, one set per small group.
- Glue each story train picture to the end of a craft stick.

3. WHICH ONE IS IT?

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

Made to Think: An advanced activity specifically designed for older preschoolers

WHAT YOU NEED:

- "Which One Is It?" Activity Page
- Cardstock
- Dot markers

WHAT YOU DO:

- Copy "Which One Is It?" on cardstock, one per child.
- Set the Activity Pages and dot markers on the table.

4. FIND BABY JESUS

[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:

- "Find Baby Jesus" Activity Page
- Cardstock
- Scissors
- Painter's tape

WHAT YOU DO:

- Copy "Find Baby Jesus" on cardstock, one set per small group.
- Tape the places around the room at child's height, making sure to only tape at the top of each paper.
- Tape the picture of Baby Jesus under the stable picture.

5. STAND UP TRAIN

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

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

WHAT YOU NEED:

- "Stand Up Train" Activity Page
- "Stand Up Train Sticker" Activity Page
- Cardstock
- Avery® #5294 labels or equivalent
- Craft tubes
- Crayons or washable markers
- Scissors
- Craft knife
- Permanent marker

WHAT YOU DO:

- Copy "Stand Up Train" on cardstock and cut, one per child.
- Write each child's name on their paper.
- Copy "Stand Up Train Sticker" on label paper, one per child.
- Cut craft tubes into one and a half-inch sections, two per child.
- Cut a half-inch slit down the center of each tube section.



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6. JOURNAL AND PRAYER

[PRAY TO GOD | PRAYER ACTIVITY]

Made to Reflect: An activity that encourages personal application and prayer

WHAT YOU NEED:

- "Memory Verse Card" from Week One in Bible
- Journal (Check out the new Ollie journal at bit.ly/3B4Z71j.)
- Fun-shaped pen (Check out the new Ollie Pen at bit.ly/3Nwj0Wh.)

WHAT YOU DO:

- If you do not have the "Memory Verse Card" from Week One, copy "Memory Verse Card" on cardstock and cut, one per small group then paperclip it in the Bible at John 3:16.
- **NOTE:** Keep the Memory Verse Card in your Bible all month.

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