

## Today's Suggested Schedule—February 2024, Week 2

**Today's Bible Story:** Family Ties (Ruth and Naomi) • *Ruth 1–2*

**Today's Bottom Line:** Be kind to the people closest to you.

**Monthly Memory Verse:** *You are God's chosen people. You are holy and dearly loved. So put on tender mercy and kindness as if they were your clothes. Don't be proud. Be gentle and patient.* Colossians 3:12 (NIRV)

**Monthly Virtue:** Kindness—Showing others they are valuable by how you treat them

**Basic Truth:** I should treat others the way I want to be treated.

*Before kids arrive, take a few moments to pray for them. Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. Pray for any difficult family situations your few might be navigating. Ask God to give everyone patience and grace to extend to those they see most often. Pray that kids would take time to notice and thank the people who do kind things for them. Ask God to give them ideas for how they can make sure those people know they are valuable.*

Check out our Pinterest page here <https://bit.ly/447HSZi> for a visual on some of the activities.

### LARGE GROUP (35 minutes)

**STORY:** Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways

**WORSHIP:** Inviting People to Respond to God

Hang Time

Welcome/Opener

Worship

Bible Story

Bottom Line

Prayer

Closer

### SMALL GROUP (25 minutes)

**GROUPS:** Creating a Safe Place to Connect

Story Exploration

Application Activity: Gear Up!

Bible Story Review: Campfire "S'mores"

Memory Verse Activity: A VERSE-atile Adventure

Prayer Activity: Pray and Dismiss

**HOME:** Prompting Action Beyond the Experience

Parent Cue Card (Print or Email)

Devotionals for Kids

Parent Cue App

## The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

*Use this if kids have questions about following Jesus.*

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word gospel. Clarify that the word gospel means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.

**God rules.** Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.

**We sinned.** Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)

**God provided.** Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.

**Jesus gives.** Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.

**We respond.** Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

If a child has expressed interest in following Jesus, please let the parents know so they can be a part of the conversation that their child is having about faith.

### What Now?

If you put your trust in Jesus Christ and believe in Him as the One who forgives your sins and makes it possible for you to know God, we are so proud of you! There is no greater single decision that you could make.

We believe that baptism is an important next step for you. Baptism is your way of telling your friends and family, “Hey, I'm a follower of Jesus!” If you're interested in learning more or participating in baptism, talk to a staff member about the next steps you should take.

## Kindness Activity

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

**What You Need:** Prepared large poster board (or butcher paper tree), yellow sticky notes, and pencils

*Note: This activity will be added to each week this month. Keep the “tree” with sticky notes attached to use again each week.*

### What You Do:

- Point out the tree hanging up in the space.
- Give each kid a yellow sticky note and a pencil.
- Explain kids will be adding different color sticky notes to the tree each week.
- Invite the kids to draw a picture to show how someone has shown them kindness before.
- Prompt their thinking by asking:
  - Has anyone ever shared something with you? What did they share?
  - Has someone helped you when you’ve fallen or gotten hurt? How did they help you?
  - Has someone ever smiled at you? How did it make you feel?
  - Has someone complimented you? What did they say? What was it for?
- Invite kids to share their drawing with the group.
- After everyone has shared, instruct them to add their sticky note somewhere on the tree.
- *Optional: Add a caption to each sticky note as kids share.*

### What You Say:

“It’s so good to remember ways people have been kind to us. Our tree is really starting to bloom already with some beautiful acts of kindness! We’re going to add some more ‘blooms’ this month!

**[Transition] Let’s go hear about someone who gave us many examples of how to show KINDNESS!”**

**Do at a time that works for you in your class.**

## **GROUPS: Creating a Safe Place to Connect (25 minutes)**

### **Story Exploration**

During the cycle of judges, a woman named Naomi left Israel with her husband. Her sons married women from Moab, but they had no children. Naomi's husband and sons died, meaning her family no longer had a way to keep the land that belonged to them in Israel. Ruth, her daughter-in-law, worked hard to gather food to feed them both, but she needed a redeemer—someone to buy the land Naomi had and provide for them.

God provided a redeemer for Ruth. Boaz saw Ruth's faithfulness to Naomi and her hardworking attitude. He was kind and cared for her and wanted to protect her from hard times. Boaz agreed to redeem Ruth and buy the land that belonged to Naomi's family. God used Boaz and Ruth to further His plan to send the true Redeemer, Jesus. Ruth and Boaz became the great-grandparents of King David. And David was an important ancestor of Jesus, the Son of God. Through Boaz and Ruth, God provided the One who saved the world from sin and death.

Boaz was a family redeemer. He helped his close relatives who were in trouble. Boaz cared for Ruth and Naomi because their husbands had died. In a similar way, Jesus is our Redeemer. We need help because we sin. Jesus bought our salvation for us by taking our punishment when He died on the cross.

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

- Where was Ruth from originally? (Moab, Ruth 1:4)
- What did Boaz do for Ruth? (invited her to stay in his fields, offered her protection and water, married her and redeemed her and Naomi; Ruth 2:8-9; 4:14)
- Boaz and Ruth were the great-grandparents of whom? (David, the eventual king of Israel and an important ancestor of Jesus; Ruth 4:17-22)
- How does Boaz point us forward to Jesus? Guide kids to discuss the fact that Boaz bought back the land of Naomi and Ruth's family. He redeemed the women and gave them a new life. Through Jesus, we can be redeemed from sin, protected from death, and given new life with God forever.
- How did Jesus redeem us? Guide kids to understand that we are born in sin. We cannot earn God's love, so we needed Jesus to save us. Jesus came to earth to live the perfectly obedient life we never could. He died the death we deserved and rose again to prove that His sacrifice was enough. He defeated sin and death so we could have new life with God.
- How does God's great love for us change the way we behave toward others? Help kids see that when we love God, we will want to obey Him and love the things He loves. That includes loving other people. We will want to see those in need comforted and cared for. Obeying God means taking care of other people and showing them His love.

## 1. Gear Up!

### [Live for God | Application Activity]

*Made to Connect: an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding*

#### What You Need: Campsite materials

#### What You Do:

- Set out the campsite materials.
- Show the kids the tools they have to create the “campsite.”
- Instruct the “campers” to put together the campsite.
  - If making the campfire out of paper, show the kids how to roll the brown construction paper into logs and tape them, and to crumple up the tissue paper for flames.
- Encourage teamwork.
- Provide verbal praise to any kids you notice displaying kindness and patience as they work with the other kids in the group.
- As kids work together, remind them to show kindness to everyone—including the people closest to you; and to treat each other the way you would want to be treated!
- When finished, gather the campers around the campfire.
- Ask:
  - Putting together the pieces of the campsite definitely required some teamwork! What are some ways you saw people being kind, or that you experienced someone else’s kindness while you were putting our campsite together? (*Prompt with examples you observed, if needed.*)
  - Was it easier to be kind to kids in our group who you don’t know as well?
  - Was it easier to get frustrated with kids you do know really well?
  - What would happen if you, or someone else, decided not to be kind when you had to work together to accomplish something?
  - Do you think kindness helps a team work together?

#### What You Say:

“The campsite you all created is lovely! It took teamwork to put everything together! Teamwork is important, but the part that impressed me the most was the kindness I saw! (*If possible, try to give some specific examples.*) I loved seeing how you treated others the way you would want to be treated and that you remembered to **[Bottom Line] be kind to the people closest to you.**”

“Sometimes when we’re close to people all of the time—like the people we live with—it can be hard to remember to be kind to them. Sometimes we can forget the simple things, like saying “thank-you” when someone does something for us at home. Let’s remember to **[Bottom Line] be kind to the people closest to you.**”

## 2. Campfire “S’mores”

### [Talk about God | Bible Story Review]

*Made to Connect: an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding*

**What You Need:** Prepared campsite from previous activity, and flashlight

#### What You Do:

- Instruct your “campers” to circle around your “campfire.”
- Join the circle yourself!
- Ask:
  - Have you ever been on a camping adventure?
  - If you have been camping before, what were your favorite camping treats?
- Ask kids if they know what a s’more is. (*Invite responses, and explain if needed.*)
- Hold the flashlight and turn it on.
- Demonstrate the activity to the group by saying, “My favorite part of today’s Bible Story was when \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_. Hey, [name of kid on your left], will you tell me ‘s’more’ of the story?” (*Pass them the flashlight.*)
- Help the kid with the flashlight share about their favorite part of the Bible Story in the same way.
  - Prompt them with the wording you used if needed.
- Once the kid has shared, direct them to ask the kid next to them in the circle to share “s’more” of today’s Bible Story and pass them the flashlight.
- It’s okay if parts get repeated—encourage the kids to share their own reasons why it’s their favorite part.
- Prompt kids with different parts from the story, as needed.
- Continue going around the circle until everyone has had a chance to share.

#### What You Say:

“Ruth, Orpah, and Naomi had grown very close because of all that happened to them. Ruth definitely showed kindness to Naomi when she stayed with Naomi and traveled back to Naomi’s homeland with her. It would have been easier for Ruth to go back home to all the people and places that she knew like Orpah did. But Ruth continued to show Naomi kindness by going out into the fields and gathering wheat for her and Naomi. Ruth was kind to Naomi, and her kindness showed Naomi that she mattered.

“Boaz, who was Naomi’s close family member, was kind to both of the women as well. Ruth and Boaz’s kindness led to great things! Ruth became part of the family that Jesus is a part of! It’s good to be kind ‘s’more’ and ‘s’more’! I hope that this week, and really any time you can, you’ll be sure to show God’s love and **[Bottom Line] be kind to the people closest to you.**”

**[Make It Personal]** (*Share a time in your life when someone close to you showed you kindness and let you know that you mattered.*)

### 3. A VERSE-atile Adventure

#### [Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

*Made to Move: an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body*

**What You Need:** Bibles (marked at Colossians 3:12 for Kindergarteners), brown construction paper, permanent marker, flashlight, and floor tape

#### What You Do:

- Give each kid a Bible. (Marked Bibles for the Kindergarteners.)
- Together, look up Colossians 3:12 using the Bible Navigation Tips below.

**Finding verses with kindergartners:** Guide children to open the Bibles to the marked page. Point to the word *Colossians* at the top of the page as you say “Colossians” aloud. Then guide children to find the big number 3 on the page. Explain that this is the chapter number. Finally, guide them to look under the big 3 for the little 12; this is the verse number. Tell them to leave their finger on the verse as you read the verse aloud. Then lead everyone to say the verse together.

**Finding verses with 1<sup>st</sup> graders:** Guide them to open their Bibles to the front and find the table of contents. (Hold up a Bible opened to the table of contents to show the kids what the page looks like.) When the kids find the table of contents, lead them to find Colossians in the list under “New Testament.” You can help by telling them that Colossians starts with the letters C-O. When the kids find Colossians, lead them to look at the page number beside the word. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find Colossians. Help the kids find the page. When they find Colossians, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find chapter 3. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find verse 12 in chapter 3.

- Write a few words from the Memory Verse on each sheet of paper.
- Lay the pieces of paper down on the floor in verse order and secure with tape in order to make a path, winding around your group space.
- Instruct the kids to line up at the start of the path.
- Give the first kid in line the flashlight.
- Instruct the kid to turn on the flashlight.
- Direct the kid to use the flashlight to “light their path” and step on each piece of construction paper while saying that part of the verse out loud. Prompt kids to repeat after you, as needed.
- Once the kid has reached the end of the path, instruct the kid to return to the line, and give the flashlight to the next kid in line.
- Continue until all the kids have navigated the path with the flashlight.
- Offer variety by alternating different ways kids can navigate the path (walking, hopping, balancing on one foot, etc.).

#### What You Say:

“It’s so good to know God’s Word can always be with us. In another verse found in Psalm 119:105, it tells us that God’s Word is *‘a lamp that shows me the way. It is like a light that guides me’* (NIRV).

“We used a flashlight to show us the words of the verse on our ‘path,’ but God’s Word lights our path in our lives! Colossians 3:12 gives us so many good reminders of how to live our lives so others can benefit from our kindness and most importantly, from seeing God at work through us! Let’s remember this verse so it can ‘light the way’ and remind us how to act so people can see Jesus’ love through us and so they can know that they matter!”



#### 4. Pray and Dismiss

##### [Pray to God | Prayer Activity]

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

##### What You Say:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?
- Are there any promises in this story to remember?
- How do they help me trust and love God?

**What You Need:** Campsite from previous activity

##### What You Do:

- Instruct the kids to sit in a circle around your campfire.
- Join the circle yourself!
- Remind kids we can ask God to help us remember to be kind and especially to **[Bottom Line] be kind to the people closest to you.**
- Invite any kids who would like to pray, to pray for the kid next to them.
- Demonstrate the prayer by saying, "God, please help me to be kind to the people closest to me and thank You for \_\_\_\_\_, sitting on my right. Please help \_\_\_\_\_ to be kind to the people they are closest to."
- Instruct the kids to continue the prayer around the circle.
- If anyone doesn't want to pray out loud, be sure to jump in and pray for the kid they would have been praying for.
- When the prayer comes back to you, close your group time in prayer.

##### What You Say:

"Dear God, thank You for our wonderful friends in group. Please help us be kind to the people we are closest to like the friends, siblings, parents, teachers, coaches, and caregivers in our lives. Please help the adults in our lives to be great examples of how to show kindness to the people they are close to as well. Please show us ways to be kind this week, like Jesus. We love You and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

As adults arrive to pick up, direct the kids to show off the Kindness Tree and share what they added to the tree.



## GETTING READY

Here's everything you need to know to get ready for this week.

### Kindness Activity

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

#### What You Need:

- Large poster board (or brown and green butcher paper), one for each Small Group
- Before group time:
  - Draw a tree on the poster board or cut the butcher paper in the shape of a tree.
  - Use tape to hang up the tree somewhere in your space. (This will be used throughout the month. If you need to take it down after group time, be sure to store it for future weeks this month.)
- Yellow sticky notes, one for each kid
- Pencils, one for each kid

### **GROUPS: Creating a Safe Place to Connect (25 minutes)**

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible Story applies to real-life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

**(Choose as many of these activities as you like.)**

*\* If you don't have time to do all these activities, be sure to do activity #1.*

## Story Exploration – No supplies

### \*1. Gear Up!

**[Live for God | Application Activity]**

*Made to Connect: an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding*

#### What You Need:

- Variety of gear to create a campsite; for example:
  - pretend campfire
  - small tent or teepee
  - lantern/flashlight
  - camping chairs
  - blanket
  - sleeping bag, etc.
- *Optional: Provide materials for a more handmade campsite using the following items:*
  - *Blanket or tablecloth draped over chairs to make a tent*
  - *Tape; brown construction paper; orange, red, and yellow tissue paper to make a campfire.*

### 2. Campfire “S’mores”

**[Talk about God | Bible Story Review]**

*Made to Connect: an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding*

#### What You Need:

- Prepared campsite from previous activity
- Flashlight, one for each Small Group

### 3. A VERSE-atile Adventure

**[Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]**

*Made to Move: an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body*

**What You Need:**

- Bibles (marked at Colossians 3:12 for Kindergarteners), one for each kid
- Brown construction paper, one pack for each Small Group
- Permanent marker, one for each Small Group
- Flashlight, one for each Small Group
- Floor tape, one roll for each Small Group

#### **4. Pray and Dismiss**

**[Pray to God | Prayer Activity]**

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

**What You Need:**

- Campsite from previous activity

#### **HOME: Prompting Action Beyond the Experience**

- Print on cardstock or email this week's devotionals and Parent Cue cards.
- Tell parents about our additional family resources: **Parent Cue app**