



TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Joyful, Joyful

Gabriel Appears to Mary
Luke 1:26-56

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

You can have joy because
God has a plan for you.

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

Today in the town of David a
Savior has been born to you.
He is the Messiah, the Lord.
Luke 2:11, NIV

MONTHLY LIFE APP

Christmas—Celebrating Jesus,
God's greatest gift

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

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

Early Arriver
Opening Activity

LARGE GROUP

35
MIN

STORY: Communicating God's truth in engaging ways WORSHIP: Inviting people to respond to God

Welcome/Opener
Worship ("Christmas This Year" from *Jingle Jam Wrapped Up* and "Joy to the World (Glory to the King)" from *Joy to the World (Glory to the King)* single)
Bible Story
Bottom Line
Prayer
Closer

SMALL GROUP

25
MIN

GROUPS: Creating a safe place to connect

Bible Story Review: Battle of the Teams
Application Activity: Bursting with Joy
Memory Verse Activity: Memory Verse Tree
Prayer Activity: Pray and Dismiss

HOME: Prompting action beyond the experience

Parent Cue Card (print or email)
GodTime devotional for kids
Studio252.tv



PRELUDE SOCIAL STORY WORSHIP GROUPS HOME

PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION
15 MINUTES

MADE TO PLAY

an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and/or working as a group



Before kids arrive, take a few moments to pray for them. Thank God that even in the midst of unforeseen and difficult circumstances, He has a plan for us. Pray that today you will be able to encourage kids that joy is possible in hard times because God has a plan for us. Ask God to help you trust His perfect plan for your life and the life of your small group kids.

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1. EARLY ARRIVER

WHAT YOU NEED: Offering container and timer

WHAT YOU DO:

- Welcome the kids by name as they arrive. Be sure to wish them a Merry Christmas!
- If a kid has brought an offering, encourage them to place their offering in the offering container.
- Choose a kid to think of one Christmas themed object. *(If they need help, you can whisper suggestions to them like: wreath, angel, manger, etc.)*
- Tell them not to say what they are thinking about but to keep it to themselves.
- Invite the rest of the kids to guess the object by asking only "yes" or "no" questions.
- Use a timer or set a limit of 20 questions.
- Continue playing until each kid has had a chance to think of a Christmas object.



PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION
15 MINUTES

MADE TO PLAY

an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and/or working as a group



2. OPENING ACTIVITY

WHAT YOU NEED: "Joyful Ornament" Activity Page, "Sad Ornament" Activity Page, music

WHAT YOU DO:

- Invite the kids to sit in a circle.
- Give one kid the "joyful" ornament and another kid the "sad" ornament.
- Instruct the kids to pass the ornaments to the right when the music plays.
- When the music stops, the kid holding the "sad" ornament must share one thing that makes them sad.
- The kid holding the "joyful" ornament must share one thing that makes them joyful.
- Continue playing the game until it's time to go to large group, making sure you end with something joyful.

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WHAT YOU SAY:

"Thank you for sharing with the group what makes you joyful and what makes you sad. It's normal to feel both ways. Today, we'll hear a story where someone felt two ways, too—except she felt scared at first then joyful. **[Transition] Let's go to Large Group to find out why we can be joyful, no matter what.**"

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

**Today in the town of David a
Savior has been born to you.
He is the Messiah, the Lord.**
Luke 2:11, NIV

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

MONTHLY LIFE APP

**Christmas—Celebrating Jesus,
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CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO PLAY

an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and/or working as a group



1. BATTLE OF THE TEAMS

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Angel" Activity Page, "Bow" Activity Page, "Tree" Activity Page, "Questions and Answers" Activity Page, "Questions Cards" Activity Page

WHAT YOU DO:

- Divide the group into four teams.
- Give each team one "angel" card, one "bow" card, and one "tree" card.
- Make sure you keep the "Questions and Answers" Activity Page.
- Tell kids that you will read a question that has three possible answers. Those questions and answers are on the sheet of paper that you gave each group.
 - An angel, a bow, or a tree marks each answer.
 - Kids will work together to decide which of the three answers is the correct answer.
 - Each round, read a question and the three possible answers out loud, and then hold up the corresponding "Questions Card" to help kids remember which answer goes with which symbol.
 - Give the teams time to choose their answer.
 - After everyone has had a chance to discuss, direct teams to hold up the card (angel, bow, or tree) that is associated with their answer.
 - The team with the most correct answers wins.

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WHAT YOU SAY:

"Mary was an ordinary person—like you and me. She was going to get married to Joseph and live a normal life. But then the mighty angel Gabriel showed up with something incredible to announce! How did Mary feel when Gabriel showed up? (*She was very upset.*) How do think she felt when he told her that she would be the mother of the Savior of the world who everyone had been waiting for? I bet she felt excited and overwhelmed. I would have felt all kinds of feelings, too!

"In spite of feeling all those emotions, Mary realized that God had a perfect plan for her life. It would look very different then she had ever imagined. But God had chosen her to be Jesus' mom! God had chosen her to raise the Savior who would save His people from their sins. Wow! Mary probably felt a lot of things, but one of the emotions Mary felt was joy! She was so joyful that she burst into a song of thanks to God!

"Did you know God has a perfect plan for your life, too? He does! It's a really, really good one. Even when unexpected things happen in your life, you can find joy in knowing that God is with you and He is always working toward the good plan He has for you. **You can have joy because God has a plan for you.**"



CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO EXPLORE

an activity that extends learning through hands-on experimentation and discovery



***2. BURSTING WITH JOY**
[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: Plastic spherical ornament with a removable top, baking soda, vinegar, plastic cup, serving tray with slotted compartments to hold the ornament (or an egg carton), pan, turkey baster (or large eye dropper), plastic tablecloth, paper towels, funnel, tablespoon, (optional) food coloring

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Joyful, Joyful

Gabriel Appears to Mary
Luke 1:26-56

WHAT YOU DO:

NOTE: We strongly recommend that you watch this experiment at <https://bit.ly/32nJK21> and practice it a few times before you do it for the kids.

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

**You can have joy because
God has a plan for you.**

- Before the kids arrive:
 - Place one tablespoon of baking soda in one of the serving tray compartments (or in one of the egg carton compartments).
 - Remove the top from the ornament so there is a circular opening on top.
 - Using the funnel, pour two tablespoons of baking soda into the ornament.
 - Place the ornament on top of the serving tray or egg carton compartment that holds the baking soda.
 - Place the serving tray or egg carton in the pan. The pan will catch the fizz from the eruption.
 - Pour vinegar into the plastic cup and set it aside. (optional) add a few drops of food coloring for different colored fizz.
 - Make sure the turkey baster or large eyedropper and the paper towels are within reach.
 - Cover the experiment surface with a plastic tablecloth.
- Once the kids arrive, direct the kids to gather around the pan with the tray and ornament on it.
- Ask the kids to share a time when they felt so super excited that they thought they might explode!
- After a few kids share their stories, squirt the pre-measured vinegar into the top of the ornament using a turkey baster or large eyedropper.
- Take a step back.
- Be prepared to make a comparison between the eruption caused by the chemical reaction and the stories the kids shared about being so joyful they thought they might burst.
- Repeat the experiment a few times to give all the kids a chance to share their joyful stories.

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

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MONTHLY LIFE APP

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WHAT YOU SAY:

"In our experiment, the eruption was massive! The foam spilled all over. It could not be contained in the little ornament!"



WEEK
TWO
DECEMBER 2020

SMALL GROUP
2-3

PRELUDE SOCIAL STORY WORSHIP GROUPS HOME

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

(* 2. BURSTING WITH JOY, CONTINUED)

“In the same way, even though Mary was probably overwhelmed when she got the news that she would become pregnant with God’s Son, soon she became so joyful that her joy could not be contained. Her joy came from knowing that even though her life would be different than what she expected, God was with her and He had a perfect plan for her life. God was using her to bring the Savior into the world to save us from our sins. **[Make It Personal] (Share an example of a time when something didn’t go your way and you asked God to help you get through it. How did remembering that God was with you and had a plan for you help you have joy? How did it turn out?) You can have joy because God has a plan for you.**”



WEEK
TWO
DECEMBER 2020

SMALL GROUP
2-3

PRELUDE SOCIAL STORY WORSHIP GROUPS HOME

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO MOVE

an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body



3. MEMORY VERSE TREE

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Verse Ornaments" Activity Page, Bible, painter's tape, two Christmas gift bags, Christmas colored cardstock, and scissors

WHAT YOU DO:

- Find Luke 2:11 and read it out loud.
- Divide the group into two teams.
- Create a tape outline of a Christmas tree on the floor for each team.
- Place a Christmas gift bag with the "Verse Ornaments" in it at the base of each tree.
- Ask the kids to line up in front of their tree.
- Instruct the kids to take turns retrieving an ornament from the bag and placing each ornament in the correct order "on" the tree to create the verse.
- Encourage the kids to be creative with where they place the ornaments on the tree as long as the ornaments are in the correct order.
- The team that correctly assembles the verse first, wins.

WHAT YOU SAY:

"What are some the gifts you would love to receive this Christmas? Would you go crazy with joy if you got one of them?"

"Do you know that the best gift you can ever receive is Jesus? When God gave us Jesus it was the best gift ever. That's what our memory verse reminds us!

"God had a plan to send Jesus to rescue you for a long, long time. It's part of His good plan for your life! And even if life looks differently than you thought it would, remember Jesus. Remember that God loves you so much it was His good plan to send Jesus to rescue you so you could have a relationship with Him. Jesus is the gift that can bring you the greatest joy, no matter what happens. And you can trust that the rest of God's plan for your life is a good one, too. **You can have joy because God has a plan for you.**"

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PRELUDE SOCIAL STORY WORSHIP GROUPS HOME

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO REFLECT

an activity that creates space for personal processing and application



4. PRAY AND DISMISS
[PRAY TO GOD | PRAYER ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: Index cards and pens

WHAT YOU DO:

- Pass out an index card and a pen to each kid.
- Invite the kids to write one word on the index card that describes how they feel when they think about the fact that God has a plan for their life.
- Invite the kids to interject the words they wrote as you close with the following prayer.

WHAT YOU SAY:

“Lord, we are so grateful that You have a plan for our lives. When we think of Your plan, we feel *(pause to let kids read the words they wrote on their slips of paper)*. Remind us that You are working for Your good plan in our lives, even on our hardest days. Remind us that You are always with us, no matter what. Thank You for giving us a way to find joy even when things don’t go our way. We love You. In Jesus’ name, amen. **You can have joy because God has a plan for you.**”

As adults arrive to pick up, have them ask kids to show them their index cards. Let it prompt a conversation about how kids learned that God has a plan for their lives.

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GETTING READY

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

SOCIAL: PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION (15 MINUTES)

Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Get ready to experience today's story.

(Choose one or both of these activities.)

In the Prelude folder of your curriculum, you'll find a general summary of Social Distancing Recommendations. Please refer to this document so you can plan your Small Group experience with health and safety in mind.

1. EARLY ARRIVER

Made to Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and/or working as a group

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Offering container
- Timer

2. OPENING ACTIVITY

Made to Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and/or working as a group

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Print the "Joyful Ornament" Activity Page on cardstock and cut out; one for each small group
- Print the "Sad Ornament" Activity Page on cardstock and cut out; one for each small group
- Music

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 #2.*

1. BATTLE OF THE TEAMS

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

Made to Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and/or working as a group

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Print the "Angel" Activity Page on cardstock and cut apart; four cards for each small group
- Print the "Bow" Activity Page on cardstock and cut apart; four cards for each small group
- Print the "Tree" Activity Page on cardstock and cut apart; four cards for each small group
- Print the "Question and Answers" Activity Page; one for each small group
- Print the "Questions Card" Activity Page on cardstock; four sets for each small group

*2. BURSTING WITH JOY

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

Made to Explore: an activity that extends learning through hands-on experimentation and discovery

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Baking soda
- Plastic globe ornament with removable top, one for each small group
- Vinegar
- Plastic cup that can hold one cup of liquid, one for each small group
- Serving tray with compartments or an egg carton, one for each small group
- Pan with a lip to catch the liquid from the eruption, one for each small group
- Turkey baster or large eye dropper, one for each small group
- Plastic table cloth to cover the table or floor, one for each small group
- Paper towels
- Tablespoon, one for each small group
- Funnel, one for each small group
- (Optional) Food coloring
- **NOTE:** We strongly recommend that you watch this experiment at <https://bit.ly/32nJK21> and practice it a few times before you do it in front of the kids



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2-3

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GETTING READY

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

3. MEMORY VERSE TREE

[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:

- Print the "Verse Ornaments" Activity Page on Christmas colored cardstock and cut apart; two sets of ornaments for each small group (24 total ornaments)
- Christmas gift bags; two for each small group
- Painter's tape

4. PRAY AND DISMISS

[PRAY TO GOD | PRAYER ACTIVITY]

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

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Index cards; one for each kid
- Pens

HOME: PROMPTING ACTION BEYOND THE EXPERIENCE

- Print on cardstock or email this week's GodTime devotionals and Parent Cue cards.
- Tell parents about our additional family resources: **Studio252.tv** and the **Parent Cue app**.