



## Prayer in the Garden

Matthew 26

**God Statement: Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life**

**KEY VERSE:**

**"Jesus said, I am the way, the truth, and the life." John 14:6, NIRV**

### CHECK-IN

**(until 15 minutes after the start of each service)**

*Purpose: To build relationships with families and help parents feel comfortable leaving their child.*

*As parents check-in their child at your classroom, try to welcome them by name to help them feel secure in leaving their child in your care. Once you've completed each of the check-in procedures, welcome the child into your classroom and encourage him/her to play with the classroom toys and activities. If you have LITs in your classroom, this is a great time for them to help engage with the kids while you continue checking in the kids.*

*If a child brings money for offering, allow them to put the money in the class offering bank. Thank them for sharing with others.*

*If a child is upset or reluctant to enter the room, encourage him or her by offering toys, books or other fun items. If a child is still upset, let the parents know that we will text them if their child continues to be upset. Then, offer to carry the child into the classroom and try to calm the child with toys or other activities.*

*Use the "Connect" reminder (listed below) to help kids feel comfortable and safe in your class!*

### CONNECT WITH KIDS

*Purpose: Building relationships & prioritizing safety for our youngest children.*

Our goal, first and foremost, when serving babies and young toddlers is to prioritize building trusting relationships and the feeling of safety. We build trust with our littlest kids by meeting needs and helping them learn that church is a secure place where they are loved, known and safe.

The 4 Ss are a simple way to keep our hearts and minds focused on this:

When a child feels...(most of the time)

**SAFE:** physically and emotionally

**SEEN:** known and understood

**SOOTHED:** calmed and supported

They can become **SECURE.**

## EXPLORE ACTIVITY

(10 minutes)

*The Explore Activity is a chance to get the kids thinking about the upcoming Bible story for the day. Encourage your kids to engage with the activity as they prepare for the lesson.*

### DISCUSS: Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

In today's lesson, we are going to learn about how Jesus prayed.

**Say:** Jesus loved to talk to His father, God. He told Him all His troubles and prayed for His friends and prayed for us. He was preparing to die on the cross for our sins. He loved us that much. But, He didn't stay dead! He came alive again.

### MAKE: Beautiful cross

**Supplies:** per person: 1 sandwich sized ziplock baggie, several colors of washable markers, 1 3x5 or 4x6 ish piece of cardstock with a cross drawn on it. Small spray bottle filled with water.



#### Directions:

- Sit with one or two kids at a time.
- Have all supplies ready.
- Kid should color all over one side of the baggie with several colors of marker.
- Spray bag lightly one or two times.
- Lay the cardstock facedown on the damp bag. Push it down and smooth it all over.
- Gently lift it up and admire your beautiful cross.

**Say:** Even though it was a terrible thing for Jesus to go through, He died for us because He loves us. This beautiful cross reminds us how much Jesus loves us!

## CLEAN UP

(5 minutes)

*Have the children begin cleaning up as you transition into Large Group time. All the toys should be put away by the end of clean up time.*

Try singing: "Clean up, clean up, everybody do your share. Clean up, clean up, everybody everywhere."

## LARGE GROUP

(15 minutes)

After clean up, have your class gather around the story time rug/blanket/squares and Hamilton's house for Large Group time. .

### WELCOME & PRAYER

Tell the kids you are so excited to have them joining you this morning and give them a brief explanation of Large Group and the expectations of them during this time. After going over the expectations, pray to open large group time.

**Offering – ask:** Did anyone bring money for an offering today? This money is used to help other people. You may put your money in the class offering bank.

## WORSHIP

*Purpose: Engage our youngest children through the power of music!*

Use the Little Kids music videos on Plex to sing some simple songs with your class. To access these videos, go to **Plex > Videos > EC > Babies folder**.

This month, focus on singing these songs:

- He is Alive!
- King of Me
- Hosana Rock
- Happy Day

## READ A BIBLE STORY

*Purpose: Engage our youngest children in a meaningful way by teaching God's word!*

This week, read about a story about Jesus praying in the garden.

**BIG IDEA:**  
**Jesus loved to talk to His father, God. When He was happy or sad or just wanted to spend time with Him, Jesus prayed.**

As you read, try to engage the child(ren) even more by pointing to the pictures as you read, allowing the kids to turn the page or repeating key words and phrases. It's ok if you don't read every word on

the page! Kids have very short attention spans (1 minute for each year of age) so try to keep your interactions short and don't get discouraged if a child loses focus!

## BIBLE STORY (5-7 minutes)

### THIS WEEK'S LESSON: Jesus Prayed in the Garden

(Matthew 26)

*Using the props and Hamilton puppet, tell the story for the day. Make sure to keep it brief and engaging by asking the kids questions throughout and using Hamilton to keep their attention.*

***Invite Hamilton to come out and see the class. Hamilton is holding his Bible.***

**Say:** Hi Hamilton, I see you have your Bible today. Our story today is from the Bible. The Bible is true. Do you want to hear about it? ***Hamilton nods***

**Read the lesson below.**

#### Share about the story of Jesus praying in the Garden:

- After Jesus was done with his special dinner with His friends, He went to a garden to go and pray.
  - Let's pretend to eat our dinner. Here is some pretend bread. *Pretend to give each child a piece of bread. Now pretend to eat it. Mmmm. Rub your tummy.*
- Jesus knew what was about to happen. Jesus was about to go to heaven.
- Jesus was going to die on the cross for us to take away our sins.
  - Only Jesus can take away our sins because He is the Savior!
  - Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.
- Even though Jesus knew what was about to happen, He was sad.
  - Can you show me your sad face? Yes, you look very sad.
- Jesus went to one of His favorite places. A special garden.
  - Let's stand up and walk in place. Yes, Jesus walked to the garden.
- Then Jesus prayed to God.
  - God is the best person to go to when we are sad (show me your sad face) or afraid (show me your afraid face) or happy! (show me your happy face)
- We can pray to God too!
- We can pray about anything!
- So, let's pray now and thank God for sending Jesus.
  - Dear God thank you for sending Jesus to die on the cross for us. Help us to remember how much Jesus loves us.
- Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life!
- **Hamilton, time for you to go home now. Will you read your Bible and pray? *Hamilton nods and goes to his home.* Let's all wave goodbye to Hamilton. Bye, Hamilton.**

**SAY IT OUT LOUD! (30 seconds)**

*This is the opportunity to remind the children of the God Statement for the day. Even if they struggle to pay attention during the lesson, this part is important to do every week.*

We are learning that Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. (Have the kids shout it out together multiple times).

**WORSHIP RESPONSE (2 minutes)**

Worship Response is an opportunity for the kids to apply what they just learned and to respond to what God is doing in their life. *Have the kids sit in a place where they can be still and reflect independently.* Then read through the Worship Response prompts below as you lead the kids through the time.

*Encourage class to sit quietly.*

**Say:** Friends, Jesus prayed about everything! What can we pray about? (Let the children answer with specific things to pray about. Help them think of things if they need suggestions. Mom, dad, grandma, can't sleep, afraid, a puppy, preschool.) Let's pray for some of those things now. *(let each child who wants to say something.)*

Dear Jesus, please help my \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Jesus, we thank you for \_\_\_\_\_

Let's all say Amen together. "Amen!"

**BLESSING (1 minute)**

*Read the verse and blessing over the kids before closing Large Group. Encourage the kids to stand and open their hands to receive the blessing as a truth that they can take with them this week and hide in their hearts.*

**Say:** Friends, may you always remember that you can pray to Jesus anytime. You can ask Him to help you or protect you or you can just tell Him that you love Him. He is the Way, the Truth and the Life!

**CLOSING ACTIVITIES**

**(Until parents pickup)**

**PLAY: Walking to the Garden**

*Supplies: none*

**Directions:** Lead the kids in a walk to the garden to pray, encountering obstacles in the way.

**Say:** Come on, Friends. Let's pretend we are walking with Jesus to the garden to pray.

First let's **tip toe**. Here we go. We don't want the mean soldiers to hear us.

Ooh, there are some yucky bugs and snakes. Let's **stomp** on them.

Now we have to go up a hill. Let's **march** up the hill.

There are the mean soldiers who are trying to catch us, **RUN!**

Whew, we had better slow down and rest. **Walk** very very slowly.

Look up ahead (*hold your hand to your forehead to look far away.*) I think I see the garden. Do you see it? I see Jesus. What is He doing? He is kneeling down to pray.

Let's pray too. Will you **kneel** down? Let's put our hands together to pray.

**Pray:** "Thank you Jesus for always loving us and protecting us. We love you. Amen"

## PLAY!

*Purpose: Engage our youngest children by playing games and having fun!*

While your class can participate in free play for most of the remaining classroom time, please try to lead at least one structured activity with your class. This is a great opportunity to introduce kids to classroom games and encourage interaction and participation with others.

### Suggestions of activities:

- Hide an object and let kids find it
- Name and count parts of the body
- Discuss colors & numbers
- Turn on music and play freeze dance
- Have kids follow simple instructions (hop, sit down, clap, etc.)
- Read a board book
- Build a tower and let kids knock it down
- Play with a ball

## CHECK-OUT

**(end of service)**

As parents arrive for check-out, the kids can continue participating in free play. Follow the check-out procedures for your classroom, making sure to send all of the child's belongings (diaper bag, bottle/sippy cup, pacifier, blanket, etc.) with the parent.

Give the parent encouragement about how the child did in your class and say "Bye (child's name)!"