



God Reassures

Matthew 1

God Statement: Jesus is the Good News

**“She is going to have a son. You must give him the name Jesus.
That’s because he will save his people from their sins.”**

Matthew 1:21, 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:

In today's lesson, we are going to learn about how God Reassures. He comforts and reminds us to do what He wants.

SAY: We're going to think about Joseph today. He was Jesus's daddy. Joseph worked as a carpenter. A carpenter makes things out of wood.

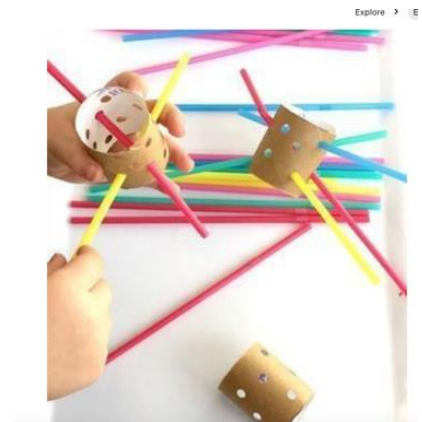
MAKE: Explore Building

Supplies: Cardboard tubes with holes, straws

Directions:

This activity will entertain 2-4 kids at a time.

- On the table, set one or 2 tubs with several cardboard tubes and straws.
- Show the kids how to poke the straw through the holes in the tubes.
- Let them explore this activity.
- Some kids will try it once, others will work for several minutes.
- Say, "Jesus' dad was a carpenter. He built things. You are building things."



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 > 2s/3s folder**. Choose some songs to sing.

- Jingle Bells
- Ring the Bells

You and the kids can use the bells and instruments in your classroom to play along with the song.

READ THE BIBLE STORY

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

This week, read about a Bible story from Luke 2.

Read the Bible story below. Try to engage the child(ren) as you share the story by showing pictures and repeating key words and phrases. It’s ok if you don’t read every word of the story! 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!

THIS WEEK'S LESSON: Gabriel Visits Joseph**BIBLE STORY:**

Bring Hamilton (the hedgehog puppet) out and allow the kids to interact with him before you begin the story (they can feel his soft fur, give him high fives, give him a hug, etc.). Use Hamilton to help keep the kids engaged while you share the story (he can do the hand motions, ask the kids questions, etc.).

Invite Hamilton to come out and see the class. Hamilton is holding a hammer.

SAY: Hi Hamilton, what do you have there? *Hamilton shows us.* A Hammer! What will you do with that? Oh, you're thinking of building something? *Hamilton nods.* Joseph is Jesus's dad. He built things, too.

Share the story of Joseph and Gabriel using the story cards in your folder.

SAY:

- We have a true story from the Bible today. This story is about Joseph, Jesus' daddy. Let's see what happens.
- Joseph loved Mary. Put your arms around yourself and give yourself a hug.
- Mary was going to have a baby. Pretend to rock a baby.
- Joseph didn't know what to do. He wanted to please God.
- The angel Gabriel came in a dream to tell Joseph that everything would be all right.
- Joseph trusted God.
- God reassured Joseph that everything would be all right.
- Mary's baby was somebody very special. Can you guess who?
- Mary's baby was Jesus!
 - Let's clap for Jesus!
- Christmas is the time to celebrate Jesus' birthday.
 - Let's tell Jesus Happy Birthday! Happy Birthday, Jesus!

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.

SAY: Today our God statement is God Reassures. We are going to say our God statement in fun ways to help us remember it.

- Have the kids say it in a fun voice.
- Have them say it in a whisper.
- Have them say it in a loud voice.

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.

SAY: In our Bible story today, we learned that God reassures.
God reassured Joseph by sending the angel to tell him everything would be ok.
God reassures us by telling us in the Bible that everything will be ok.
He is taking care of us and knows what will happen.
Put your finger and thumb together. This is a sign for “ok.”
Let’s say together: God says everything will be ok.

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 even when hard things happen, God reassures us that everything will be ok.

RESPOND ACTIVITY**(10 minutes)**

If you have extra time at the end of your lesson and small group time, the kids can participate in this activity.

EXPLORE: Repeat from earlier- Explore building and Nativity (optional)

Supplies: cardboard tubes with holes, straws, nativity set

Directions:

- Get out the tubs of straws and tubes again.
- Allow children to explore the nativity set in your classroom.
- Let a few kids at a time explore the activities.

SAY: Joseph was a carpenter and built things.
Remember that he was worried about what might happen when he found out Mary was going to have a baby.
God sent an angel to tell Joseph that everything was going to be ok.
We can pray to God when we are wondering if everything will be ok.
God reassures.

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)!"