



Jesus is the Plan

Luke 2

God Statement: Jesus is the Good News

KEY VERSE:

**"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 Jesus is the Plan.

SAY: Do you know what tomorrow is? Tomorrow is Christmas! What's your favorite part about Christmas? (*Pause for responses*) Those are all great parts of Christmas. Today, we are going to talk about another special part of Christmas. In the Bible, God had a plan to send someone to save us from our sin, all the bad things we do. That plan was Jesus! And on Christmas, we celebrate the day that Jesus was born!

MAKE: Nativity Ornament

Supplies: nativity ornament (1 per child), crayons

Directions:

- Help each child find a seat at the table.
- Provide crayons and encourage the kids to color the nativity picture in the center of their ornament.
- Write the name of the child along with the date and the location (Woodmen Kids) on the child's craft so the parent(s) can keep it as a keepsake.
- **Tip: Work one on one with kids as they arrive. This is a great task for Leaders in Training (5th-12th graders) to assist with!**
- While you are working with each child talk about the people in the picture – Mary (Jesus' mom), Joseph (Jesus' dad) and Jesus!



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 (Miss Mindy) to sing some simple songs with your class. To access these videos, **go to Plex > Videos > EC > 2s/3s folder.**

- Oh, What a Special Night
- Joy to the World
- There is a Star

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.

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: Jesus is the Plan**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 wearing a Christmas sticker.

SAY: Hamilton, what is that you're wearing? Is that a Christmas sticker? **Hamilton nods excitedly.** It looks so special! Are you excited for Christmas? **Hamilton nods excitedly.** I'm excited for Christmas, too, and not just because of the presents and decorations and fun stuff. I'm excited to celebrate that God had a plan and sent baby Jesus to us! That's the real reason we celebrate Christmas! Hamilton, are you ready for our story? **Hamilton nods excitedly.**

Read The Story of Christmas by Patricia A. Pingry.

SAY: Jesus is God's plan! After Adam and Eve sinned, God made promises all throughout the Bible to send a Savior. That was God's plan. He sent Jesus as a baby! That makes me so excited. Does that make you excited, Hamilton? Let's all wave our hands to celebrate! **Hamilton waves arms in air.** Well, we hope you have a very special Christmas, Hamilton, and we can't wait to see you next week. Let's all say "Merry Christmas" to Hamilton! **Hamilton waves bye.**

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 Jesus is the Plan. 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.
- Motion: Jesus (each middle finger touched to palm of each hand) is the plan (tap on head).

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.

Supplies: nativity stickers

SAY: Today, we talked about a very special story – the day Jesus was born!
This story is so important because people waited a very long time for Him to come.
God had a plan to send a Savior to the people – Jesus is the Savior!
Eventually, Jesus grew up and died on the cross for our sins.

Today, we are going to celebrate that Jesus was born on Christmas!
Let's sing "Happy Birthday" to Jesus and then we will each get a sticker to remind us of this special story!

(Play "Happy Birthday" song and pass out one sticker to each child)

SAY: Thank you, God, for sending Jesus to us!

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 God loves you so much that had a plan and sent Jesus – for you!

RESPOND ACTIVITY

(10 minutes)

PLAY: FIND BABY JESUS

Supplies: Baby Jesus doll from nativity set in classroom

Directions:

- Pick one child to hide baby Jesus while all the other kids close their eyes.
- When the child is done hiding baby Jesus, allow the other kids to search for him.
- Repeat!
- *Tip: If you have a much younger class, it will work better for the teacher to hide baby Jesus*

SAY: God made a plan to send a Savior – Jesus. People waited a really long time for Jesus. He was really special! Jesus helps us all become a part of God’s family! Can you find baby Jesus in our classroom?

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)!”