



Elementary Leader Guide

Dec. 7 –The Clubhouse 1st-3rd

Monthly Theme: I Am Never Alone

Today's "Big Deal" Theme Tie: God Gives Me Strength

Bible Story Reference: Angels Visited Mary and Joseph (Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-38)

**Previews of all videos listed below can be found on the Teacher Resource Page in the corresponding digital media folder.*

Arrival & Small Groups

Upon arrival children will go to their designated pod based on their grade level for small group connections time. Each “pod” will have a leader waiting for them to begin connections conversations to start the morning.

Small Group Leaders: Introduce yourself to families you don't know and use this time to welcome kids as they arrive.

Use these questions to help you get to know kids as they arrive. Ministry happens best through relationships. By spending this time with kids at the beginning, you will be able to make stronger connections as you begin teaching about how God knows them!

- *What was the best part of your week?*
- *What is your favorite part about Christmas?*
- *If you could drink hot chocolate or hot apple cider, which one would you choose?*
- *If you could only have one present this year, what would it be?*
- *If you could create one special gift for someone, what would it be?*

Countdown Video/ Leader Welcome:

**Tweens arrive as countdown video begins.*

Play Countdown Video.

Script: Hey, everyone! Welcome! My name is _____, and I am so excited to be here with you today because we are talking about the best gift ever! Say, "Best gift ever!" (*Best gift ever!*) Awesome! Today, we are going to learn all about an incredible gift. Ask, "What incredible gift?" (*What incredible gift?*) We will find out soon, but this incredible gift means we can know we are never alone because God is with us. Let me hear you say, "I am never alone!" (*I am never alone!*) Let's go!

Theme Song/Offering/Worship Song:

Between songs remind children of the purpose for giving an offering. Give them examples of ways the offering contributes to the church and community. Ask students if they know how else our giving reaches out. Then remind them that during the next worship song they can bring their offering forward and drop it into the basket.

**Tweens Leave After Worship Song*

Stage Game:

Supplies:

Dry erase board, marker, and eraser 1 per group

Leader Prep: Set out supplies.

Game Rules:

1. Divide the group into 2 teams. Pick one volunteer from each team. Bring them to the front of the room and they will be the "artists."
2. Call on the artist from one team to go first. Give the artist a word or phrase from the Christmas-themed list.
3. Allow the artist 60 seconds to draw the word/phrase on the board without using any letters, numbers, or verbal clues, while the artist's team tries to guess the drawing.
4. Listen closely to hear if the team guesses correctly within the time limit. Award a point for each correct answer. If the team does not correctly guess within the time limit, no points will be awarded.

5. Allow a new artist from each team to take a turn until all words are used.
6. Award the team with the most correct guesses after all rounds as the winner.

Script: It is time to kick the fun up a notch with a game we are calling “Christmas Sketch Off!” Let me hear you shout, “Christmas Sketch Off!” (*Christmas Sketch Off!*) This is a team game, and it is all about working together, guessing quickly, and cheering each other on! First, let’s have one player from each team join me at the front.

One “artist” from each team will take turns drawing a Christmas-themed word or phrase on the board. The two artists will have 60 seconds to sketch it out—no letters or numbers allowed—and the rest of their team members will try to guess what it is. If the team gets it right, they earn a point! The most important rule? Have fun and cheer each other on! Whether you are guessing, drawing, or cheering you are part of the team. Let’s do this! You will have 60 seconds to draw the picture while your team tries to guess. Ready? Count down with me, 3! 2! 1!

Suggested Words or Phrases:

1. *Christmas tree*
2. *Candy cane*
3. *Joy to the world*
4. *Gingerbread house*
5. *Snowball fight*
6. *Shepherds tending to their sheep*
7. *Hot cocoa*
8. *Jingle bells*
9. *Wrapping presents*
10. *Snowing*

***Use Stage Game Video Timer for each round.**

Script: You all did such a great job working together and guessing those Christmas drawings! Just like we had fun drawing pictures that have to do with Christmas, God has given us the greatest reason to celebrate—let me hear you say, “Jesus!” (*Jesus!*) That is right! Because of Jesus, we are never alone! Say, “I am never alone!” (*I am never alone.*)

As we learn about the truth that we are never alone, we get to check out a cool invention! Ask, “What invention?” (*What invention?*) I am so glad you asked! Let’s see what this do-it-yourself master named DIY Dan has to show us. Count down with me, 3-2-1!

Play Main Idea Video.

Script: Wow! The Mega-Muscle Machine gave DIY Dan enough strength to get that tree house up into the tree, even if it did not land exactly where he wanted it to! That helps us remember how God gives us strength every single day to know and follow Him, no matter what! Sometimes things do not go exactly as planned, but when we trust in God, He gives us the strength we need to follow Him. And guess what? God's strength never fails us! Say, "Never fails!" (*Never fails!*) Whether it is standing up for what is right, helping a friend, or doing something hard, God is always with us, and He give us His strength. Say, "**God gives me strength!**" (*God gives me strength!*)

Object Lesson:

Supplies:

Bible 1 per group

Christmas tree base 1 per group

Script: Let's look at this Christmas tree base for a second. What happens if you try to stand up a Christmas tree without a base? It falls over, right? The base gives the tree the strength and balance it needs to stand tall and strong. Well, sometimes we can feel wobbly, just like that wobbly tree without a base, but guess what? We do not have to wobble alone! We are never alone, say, "I am never alone!" (*I am never alone*) A relationship with God is like our base—it gives us the strength and balance we need! Say, "**God gives me strength!**" (*God gives me strength!*) When we feel weak or unsure, we can ask God for help, strength, and encouragement. And the best part? He loves to give it to us! So, remember—just like a Christmas tree needs its base to stand tall, we need God's love and strength to stand strong, no matter what life throws our way! Who gives you strength? Say, "**God gives me strength!**" (*God gives me strength!*)

Bible Story Video:

Script: (*Open the Bible.*) Today, we are diving into an amazing story from the Bible. From the what? (*Bible!*) The Bible is God's true message to us about Himself. This Bible story is all about a woman named Mary and a man named Joseph. It shows God working in an amazing way! How cool is that? Say, "Way cool!" (*Way cool!*) Let's open up to the book of Matthew. We can find it in the second part of the Bible called the New Testament! Let's dig in and see how God gives us strength. Say "**God gives me strength.**" (*God gives me strength!*)

Play Bible Story Video.

Make the Connection:

Script: Wow! Joseph and Mary had questions about what the angel shared with them. But even though they had questions, they both decided to trust God and the plan He had for them. Things in life may confuse us too or maybe even feel impossible! Situations happen that we cannot seem to understand. But guess what? We are never alone! God is always with us. Just like He was with Mary and Joseph, He is with you, and He gives you strength! Let me hear you say, **“God gives me strength!” (God gives me strength!)** When we do not know what to do, we can turn to God, like Mary and Joseph did. We can pray and trust Him! Let me hear you say, “I am never alone!” (*I am never alone!*)

(Circle one) God’s plan has always been to be with people and for us to find strength in Him. In the beginning, God created the world, and everything was perfect. There was no reason to be afraid or feel lonely.

(Circle two) But unfortunately, everything changed when sin entered the world. *Sin* is when we choose to do what we think is best rather than follow what *God* says is best. Sin separates us from God. This separation can cause fear, confusion, and many struggles in life. Yet God always had a plan in place to bring us back to Him. Say, “Let’s hear the plan!” (*Let’s hear the plan!*)

(Circle three) God told Mary and Joseph that He was sending His Son, Jesus, and they would be Jesus’ parents on earth. Jesus was born to save the world. Jesus would be our Savior, forgiving us of our sins and restoring our relationship with God. Mary and Joseph did not know exactly how things would work out, but they trusted God and followed His plan. When we face confusion or tough situations, we can do the same! We can trust that God is with us, like He was with Mary and Joseph. Through Jesus, God gives us the strength and hope to follow Him no matter what. Let me hear you say, **“God gives me strength!” (God gives me strength!)**

If you have any questions about following Jesus or want to know more about God’s strength, talk to me or a leader! We would love to help you understand how much God loves you and how you can follow Him every day!

Team Game:

Kids will form two teams and play a variation of the game “Telephone” in a relay-race style.

Big Goal: Know that, like how God strengthened Mary and Joseph through the message from the angel, God strengthens us.

Script: Today, we are going to play “Message Relay!” This game is all about teamwork and passing along encouraging messages—like how the angels brought God’s messages to Mary and Joseph! Here is how it works: I am going to place you into two teams. Each team will stand shoulder to shoulder in a line. One person from each team will come to me, and I will whisper a “message” to you. You will each go back to your team, and when I say, “Go!” you will whisper the message to the person beside you.

You cannot repeat the message, so whatever that person hears, they have to pass that message down to the person beside them. They will whisper the message they heard to the next person in line, who whispers it to the next, and so on. The last person will shout out the message. Do you think you can pass the message the fastest without changing it? Let’s see! Remember, this is about teamwork, so help each other out. You are all messengers of encouragement today! Ready? On your mark, get set, go!

Suggested Messages:

God is with you.

Jesus is the best gift ever.

You are never alone.

God gives me strength to follow Him.

I can trust God like Mary and Joseph did.

Keep It Going: Replay the game, using a different message with each round. Invite kids to come up with their own messages to pass.

Theme Verse Video:

Theme Verse Motions:

A child will be born for us, (*Cross and cradle your arms like you are holding a baby.*)

a son will be given to us. (*Spread your arms in front of you with palms up.*)

Isaiah 9:6a (*Hold your hands out like a book.*)

Script: We are going to learn a verse from the Bible to always remember that we are never alone. Say, “I am never alone!” (*I am never alone!*)

Play Theme Verse Video.

Script: It is amazing to know that God gave us the best gift ever! Say, “Best gift ever!” (*Best gift ever!*) That is right! Jesus is the best gift ever because He makes the way to have a relationship with God. We have the gift of knowing that we are never alone, and when we put our trust in Jesus, God gives us the strength to follow Him!

Theme Song:

Script: Let’s stand up and sing about the best gift ever! The what? (*Best gift ever!*) That is right! Jesus is the best gift ever, so let’s learn our Theme song all about that!

Play Theme Song Video.

Small Groups:

*Big Deal/Key Verse Review & Prayer Requests/Prayer Time

Finish up time in your small group pod by reviewing the Theme for the month, the verse and the “Big Deal” for today’s lesson. Ask for prayer requests, pray and wrap up.

Pick Up Time:

During this time children may wait around the room while videos play on the screen. There must be a leader at the door to receive parents and a second leader checking tags as they exit the room.



Elementary Leader Guide

Dec. 14 –The Clubhouse 1st-3rd

Monthly Theme: I Am Never Alone

Today’s “Big Deal” Theme Tie: God Gives Me Joy

Bible Story Reference: Mary and Elizabeth (Luke 1:26-56)

**Previews of all videos listed below can be found on the Teacher Resource Page in the corresponding digital media folder.*

Arrival & Small Groups

Upon arrival children will go to their designated pod based on their grade level for small group connections time. Each “pod” will have a leader waiting for them to begin connections conversations to start the morning.

Small Group Leaders: Introduce yourself to families you don’t know and use this time to welcome kids as they arrive.

Use these questions to help you get to know kids as they arrive. Ministry happens best through relationships. By spending this time with kids at the beginning, you will be able to make stronger connections as you begin teaching about how God knows them!

- *What was the best part of your week?*
- *What is your favorite Christmas song?*
- *If you could decorate a Christmas tree or make ornaments to hang on the tree, which would you choose?*
- *If you accidentally opened up someone else’s Christmas present, what would you do?*
- *If the ornaments on your Christmas tree could talk, what is one thing they would say about you?*

Countdown Video/ Leader Welcome:

**Tweens arrive as countdown video begins.*

Play Countdown Video.

Script: Hey, kids! I am _____, and I am so excited you are here today! Turn to your neighbor and say, “I am so excited you are here!” (*I am so excited you are here!*) I cannot wait to learn all about the best gift ever! Say, “Best gift ever!” (*Best gift ever!*) That is right! Today we are going to learn that, because of God’s Son, Jesus, we are never alone! That is the best gift ever! Let’s dive in!

Theme Song/Offering/Worship Song:

Between songs remind children of the purpose for giving an offering. Give them examples of ways the offering contributes to the church and community. Ask students if they know how else our giving reaches out. Then remind them that during the next worship song they can bring their offering forward and drop it into the basket.

**Twins Leave After Worship Song*

Stage Game:

Supplies:

Wrapped Christmas present 1 per group

Stool or chair 1 per group

Leader Prep: Set the stool or chair in the middle of the front, then place the wrapped present on top.

Game Rules:

1. Invite 1 player from each team to the front. Instruct 3 players to stand 3 feet to the left of the present and 3 players to stand to the right.
2. Display the slide, reading the line from the Christmas song.
3. Direct the first two players (one from the left line and one from the right line) to grab the present when they know the missing lyrics. Invite the player who first reaches the present to share the answer.
4. Display the answer. Award one point for the team if the answer is correct.
5. Allow the correct guesser to stay and play a second round. Direct the other player to move to the back of the lines. (Only allow correct guessers to guess two times in a row to assure all kids get a chance to play.)
6. Declare the winner as the team who earns the most points.

Script: OK, friends, let's play "Finish That Lyric!" Say, "Finish that lyric!" (*Finish that lyric!*) We are about to have so much fun seeing how well you know your Christmas songs! I will need one player from each team to join me at the front, and I will assign you to one of two teams. (*Invite players to the front, directing three to line up to the left of the present and three to the right.*)

I will show a slide, say part of a song lyric, then stop. The first two players from each team will race to grab the present. But only grab it when you know the answer! The first player to grab the present will get to guess the missing lyrics, then I will show the answer. If you get it correct, you win a point for your team *and* you get to play another round, while the other player must

return to the end of the line. If you get it incorrect, both players will go to the end of their lines. To make sure everyone gets a chance to play, correct guessers will get to play two rounds in a row, then move to the end of their line. Players, are you ready? *(Yes!)* Teams, are you ready to cheer on your teammates? *(Yes!)* Let me hear you say, "Finish that lyric!" *(Finish that lyric!)*

Show Stage Game Slide 1.

Script: "Deck the halls with ____." Finish that lyric! *(Allow answers.)* Let's see if you got it!

Show Stage Game Slide 2.

Script: "Boughs of holly." Great job! That is a point for the ____ Team! Let's see the next one.

Show Stage Game Slide 3.

Script: "Dashing through the snow, in a ____." Finish that lyric! *(Allow answers.)* Let's see if you got it!

Show Stage Game Slide 4.

Script: "One-horse open sleigh." Great job! That is a point for the ____ Team! Let's see the next one.

Show Stage Game Slide 5.

Script: "On the first day of Christmas, my ____." Finish that lyric! *(Allow answers.)* Let's see if you got it!

Show Stage Game Slide 6.

Script: "True love gave to me." Great job! That is a point for the ____ Team! Let's see the next one.

Show Stage Game Slide 7.

Script: "Silent night, holy night, ____." Finish that lyric! *(Allow answers.)* Let's see if you got it!

Show Stage Game Slide 8.

Script: "All is calm, all is bright." Great job! That is a point for the ____ Team!

Show Stage Game Slide 9.

Script: "We wish you a Merry Christmas and a ____." Finish that lyric! (*Allow answers.*) Let's see if you got it!

Show Stage Game Slide 10.

Script: "Happy New Year!" Great job! That is a point for the ____ Team! Let's see the next one.

Show Stage Game Slide 11.

Script: "Hark the herald, angels sing ____." Finish that lyric! (*Allow answers.*) Let's see if you got it!

Show Stage Game Slide 12.

Script: "Glory to the newborn King!" Awesome! That is a point for the ____ Team! Let's see the next one.

Show Stage Game Slide 13.

Script: "Joy to the world, the Lord ____." Finish that lyric! (*Allow answers.*) Let's see if you got it!

Show Stage Game Slide 14.

Script: "Is come!" Great job! That is a point for the ____ Team! Let's see the next one.

Show Stage Game Slide 15.

Script: "O holy night, the ____." Finish that lyric! (*Allow answers.*) Let's see if you got it!

Show Stage Game Slide 16.

Script: "Stars are brightly shining!" Great job! That is a point for the ____ Team! And now for the last one!

Show Stage Game Slide 17.

Script: “Away in a manger, ____.” Finish that lyric! (*Allow answers.*) Let's see if you got it!

Show Stage Game Slide 18.

Script: “No crib for a bed.” Great job! That is a point for the ____ Team!

Let's cheer for our winning team! Players, you can all have a seat. (*Allow time.*) You know, just like you cheered on your teammates and helped them finish the lyrics, there is Someone who is always with us to guide us and help us finish life's challenges—God! The Bible reminds us that we are never alone because God is always by our side. When I say, “God is with me,” you say, “I am never alone!” Ready? “God is with me!” (*I am never alone!*) That is right! No matter where we are or what we are going through, God's presence is always with us.

Today we are going to dive into the best gift ever! Say, “Best gift ever!” (*Best gift ever!*) That is right. Let's see what a do-it-yourself master named DIY Dan has to say about this. Count down with me, 3-2-1!

Play Main Idea Video.

Script: Wow, what an adventure with DIY Dan and the Joy-O-Matic! But just like we saw, true joy is not found in a machine—joy comes from God. Christmas is all about celebrating the joy God gave us by sending His Son, Jesus. Real joy comes from knowing and having a relationship with Him! Let me hear you say, “**God gives me joy!**” (*God gives me joy!*)

Object Lesson:

Supplies:

Bible 1 per group

Christmas gift bag 1 per group

Script: Look at this gift bag here. When you see a gift bag, you might be excited about the colors or design on the outside. Or the fact that the gift bag is really small or super big may intrigue you. But the real excitement comes from what is inside, right? What is inside is a surprise, something special that we will really enjoy. Happiness is a good feeling that comes and goes, like a fun moment or a cool present, but true joy is something deeper that lasts forever.

Joy is something God gives us. Say, **“God gives me joy!”** (*God gives me joy!*) That is right! Joy is “delight or pleasure inside us that comes from knowing and serving God.” When we know Him and serve Him, God gives us a joy that will last forever. How long does joy last? Say, “Forever!” (*Forever!*) Joy is not something that depends on what is happening around us—it is something that is inside us, no matter what. So when we are feeling down or worried, we can remember that God is always with us. He is never going to leave us, and because of Him, we can have joy that lasts forever! One more time, say, **“God gives me joy!”** (*God gives me joy!*)

Bible Story Video:

Script: (*Open the Bible.*) Today’s Bible story is about two amazing women, Mary and Elizabeth, and how they both experienced God’s joy in a special way. Say, “Way cool!” (*Way cool!*) This story is found in the book of Luke. That is in the second part of the Bible called the New Testament. The Bible is God’s true message to us about Himself. Repeat after me: “I am never alone!” (*I am never alone!*) Let’s dive into the story and see how Mary and Elizabeth experienced God’s joy!

Bible Story Video.

Make the Connection:

Script: What an amazing story! Let me hear you say, “Wow!” (*Wow!*) God gave Mary and Elizabeth joy. Even though their lives were about to change in huge ways, they could have joy because they knew God was with them. When we think about this story, we can remember that we are never alone. Say, “I am never alone!” (*I am never alone!*) That is right! God was with Mary and Elizabeth, and He is with us too! The joy they experienced was not just a feeling that came and went—it was deep, lasting joy that came from knowing and trusting God. Joy comes from God and lasts no matter what. Say, **“God gives me joy!”** (*God gives me joy!*) That is right! Joy does not depend on our circumstances or what is going on around us. God’s joy is something that stays in our hearts because we know that He loves us and is always with us!

(*Circle 1*) God knows that if we trust Him, we have so much joy! In the beginning, God created the world and everything was perfect. Everything was good. God created people to have a relationship with Him, and He gave the first people joy through His perfect creation.

(Circle 2) Sadly, the first people chose to disobey God. This is called sin. *Sin* is when we choose what we think is best rather than follow what *God* says is best. Sin broke the perfect relationship we had with God, and instead of joy, we started feeling the pain of separation from Him. We all sin, and no matter how hard we try, we cannot repair our relationship with God on our own.

(Circle 3) But God did not leave us without hope. He sent Jesus to repair our broken relationship with Him. Jesus paid the punishment of our sin by dying on the cross. But He defeated death when He came back to life on the third day. Jesus forgives our sin, and He gives us the joy of knowing that we are never alone. Because of Jesus, we can have a relationship with God and experience His joy forever!

If you have any questions about following Jesus or want to know more about the joy that comes from following God, talk to me or your leader. We would love to help you understand how much God loves you and how you can follow Him every day! Repeat after me: “I am never alone; **God gives me joy!**” (*I am never alone; **God gives me joy!***) And remember, because of Jesus, you can have the real, lasting joy that only He can give!

Team Game:

Kids will try to guess a joyful activity their friends are drawing.

Big Goal: Learn the difference between happiness and joy.

Leader Prep: Cut paper into slips, one per kid. Set out supplies.

Supplies:

Paper Several
Adult scissors 1 per group
Pencils 1 per child
Bucket 1 per group
Dry erase board and marker 1 per group
Dry erase board eraser 1 per group
Stopwatch or timer 1 per group

Script: All right, friends, it is time for “Sketch and Guess!” Let me hear you shout, “Sketch and Guess!” (*Sketch and Guess!*) Awesome! Everyone is going to write down something that makes you happy—maybe it is your favorite thing to eat, game to play, hobby, or sport. Everyone will have one minute to think about it and write down that word. Then we will fold up our papers

and put them in a bucket. We will take turns choosing a random paper from the bucket and drawing that item on the board for everyone else to guess what it is! Say, "Let's do this!" (*Let's do this!*)

Keep It Going: Play with teams, allowing only the team of the person drawing the option to guess with a one-minute timer.

Script: Great job, everyone! As we played "Sketch and Guess," we got to see a mix of things that make us happy. While happiness can be based on what is happening around us, God's joy is something deep inside us that never goes away. If our favorite cookies do not turn out well when we bake them or our favorite sports team loses, we may not be happy, but we can still have joy! Because God gives us joy that lasts, no matter what is happening in our lives. Say, "No matter what!" (*No matter what!*) That is right! And it is always with us because He is always with us. Who gives us joy? Let me hear you say, "God gives me joy!" (*God gives me joy!*)

Theme Verse Video:

Theme Verse Motions:

A child will be born for us, (*Cross and cradle your arms like you are holding a baby.*)

a son will be given to us. (*Spread your arms in front of you with palms up.*)

Isaiah 9:6a (*Hold your hands out like a book.*)

Script: Let's stand on our feet as we learn a verse from the Bible to always remember that we are never alone. Say, "I am never alone." (*I am never alone!*)

Play Theme Verse Video.

Script: Jesus is the best gift ever! Say, "Best gift ever!" (*Best gift ever!*) That is right! This verse tells us that a child will be given to us. That child is Jesus! Say, "Jesus!" (*Jesus!*) Because of Jesus, we have the gift of knowing that we are never alone. When we put our trust in Jesus, God gives us joy that will last forever! How long? Say, "Forever!" (*Forever!*)

Theme Song:

Script: Let's keep the celebrating going and sing all about the joy God gives us!

Play Theme Song Video.

Small Groups:

***Big Deal/Key Verse Review & Prayer Requests/Prayer Time**

Finish up time in your small group pod by reviewing the Theme for the month, the verse and the “Big Deal” for today’s lesson. Ask for prayer requests, pray and wrap up.

Pick Up Time:

During this time children may wait around the room while videos play on the screen. There must be a leader at the door to receive parents and a second leader checking tags as they exit the room.