

SOCIAL

Opening Activity



What You Need

- ☐ Offering container
- ☐ "Puzzle Pieces" Activity Page

Inclusive Supplies

- ☐ Extra "Puzzle Pieces" Activity Pages



Inclusive Pro Tips

If the kids work better in smaller groups, provide extra "Puzzle Pieces" Activity Pages, divide the kids into smaller groups, and give each group a puzzle to work on.

① What You Do

Pray for your group before they arrive → Pray for kids who will visit your group for the first time. Thank God for His perfect plan and for choosing Zechariah, Elizabeth, and Mary to be part of His big story. Ask God to help every kid learn to see that God is good and He loves us so much that He worked for years and years and years on His plan to send Jesus because He wants to be close to us. Ask God to help kids see His great love even more clearly this Christmas.

1. Before kids arrive, mix up the "Puzzle Pieces" Activity Pages and hide/place them around the group space.
2. Greet each kid by name with a fist bump, high-five, smile, or wave as they arrive!
3. Invite any kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
4. Invite the kids to work to put the puzzle together.
5. Once the puzzle is complete, read the headline aloud together.
6. Gather the kids to discuss.

② What You Say

"Great job putting the pieces together, friends! This puzzle reminds us of what we're discovering all month long. **[Bottom Line]** God always had a plan to send Jesus! Even though God worked for years and years on that plan, He always had one. Lots of pieces, over years and years, came together to be a part of it because He loves us so much. **[Transition]** In our true story from the Bible today, we'll look at one part of that plan, when an angel visited a woman named Mary to share some INCREDIBLE news with her about Jesus. Let's go find out more!"

Transition → Lead your group to the Large Group area.

GROUPS 1/4

Unbox the Greatest Gift



Bible Story Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Prepared gift-wrapped box with the cards from the "Clue Cards" Activity Page wrapped in the layers

① What You Do

1. Gather kids in a circle.
2. Explain that you're going to unwrap a gift that will help tell today's Bible Story.
3. Pass the wrapped gift around and let each kid unwrap one layer.
→ NOTE: If you have more than 7 kids in your group, let them partner up to help each other unwrap a layer.
4. Display the picture and read the recap statement on each card from the "Clue Cards" that the kids unwrap.
5. Continue until the final layer reveals the promise—the Greatest Gift, Jesus!

② What You Say

"Amazing job helping to recap today's Bible Story, friends! Every time we took off a layer, we got closer to seeing the promise inside. God's promise to send Jesus was the GREATEST gift ever, and just like this present, His plan was revealed step-by-step until the day Jesus was born.

"God sent His angel, Gabriel, to tell Mary she would be the mother of Jesus, God's very own Son! A Savior coming to rescue us was part of a promise God made a long time ago. We were under a curse of sin and needed to be rescued so we could be close friends with God again! So God worked on His great rescue plan step after step after step. And every step of the story that we read about today—Zechariah and Elizabeth, John being born, Mary's visit—was a part of that plan. It was all part of the plan to send Jesus. **[Bottom Line]** God always had a plan to send Jesus! And because God was faithful to carry out every step of that great rescue plan, today, anyone who chooses to follow Jesus starts a friendship with God that lasts forever!"

GROUPS 3/4

Verse Postcards*

Memory Verse Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ "Postcard" Activity Page
- ☐ Coloring supplies
- ☐ Writing materials
- ☐ Bible marked at Luke 2:11



① What You Do

1. Give each kid a postcard from the "Postcard" Activity Page.
2. Read the Memory Verse, Luke 2:11, aloud to the group.
3. Set out the coloring supplies, the writing materials, and the opened Bible where the kids can refer to it.
4. On the front, read the phrase: "God always had a plan to send Jesus!"
5. Instruct the kids to decorate the front of their postcard.
6. On the back of the postcard, encourage each kid to write out Luke 2:11.
7. Invite the kids to think of someone they'd like to give the postcard to, and write their name in the blanks.

② What You Say

"Your postcards look amazing! By writing out Luke 2:11, you've shared the exact good news the angel told the shepherds: Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord (**Luke 2:11 NIV**).

"Instead of mailing this postcard, think of someone you can give it to to share the good news with them, like the angel shared with the shepherds. God loves that person so much that Jesus Himself came to pay for sin so that person could choose to be close with God again! **[Bottom Line]** God always had a plan to send Jesus."

GROUPS 4/4

Pray and Dismiss

Prayer Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

☐ Optional: Toy microphone


① What You Do

1. Gather the kids in a circle.
2. Explain that today they get to imagine they're being interviewed for the "Good News Network."
3. Hold your hand like a pretend microphone (or optionally, use a toy one) in front of each kid and ask:
 - "If you could thank God for one thing today, what would it be?"
 - "What's one thing you're glad God planned in your life?"
4. After every kid answers, say a short prayer thanking God for what they shared.
5. Close the activity by praying for the group as a whole, thanking God for always having a plan to send Jesus.

② What You Say

"God, thank You that You love us so much that You worked for years and years to send Jesus to rescue us so we could be close friends with You again. Thank You that You always had a plan to send Jesus. Help us to share that good news all throughout this Christmas season and beyond—that You love everyone so much that You sent Jesus. We love You, God! We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen!"

Transition → As adults arrive to pick up, invite the kids to show off their Memory Verse postcards. Challenge the kids to recite Luke 2:11 to their grown-ups!

Inclusive Pro Tips



If they prefer, allow kids to whisper their answer to you, and you can "report" it for them.

Allow kids to pass if they're not ready to share. Circle back at the end in case they change their mind.