

# Small Group Leader Guide

## Today's Suggested Schedule

### Greeting & Prayer (3 minutes)

The leader greets the children and asks how they are doing. After a brief time of sharing, the group participates in a short prayer activity to prepare their hearts for the lesson.

### Small Group Activity (20 minutes)

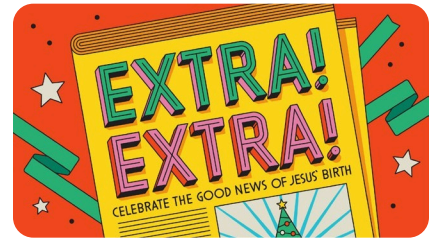
Groups: Creating a safe place to connect

### Pray & Dismiss (2 minutes)

After small group time, the leader closes in prayer. Then the children are dismissed.



THIS MONTH



Today's Bible Story

## Gabriel Visits Mary Luke 1:5-66

Bottom Line

**God always had a plan to send Jesus.**

Memory Verse

**"Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you. He is the Messiah, the Lord." Luke 2:11 NIV**



### Inclusive Pro Tips

This leader guide is created with inclusion in mind. It supports children with learning differences, disabilities, or special needs as they participate alongside their peers. Look for the highlighted sections for extra tips to help welcome and include every child. For more resources, check out our free *A Place at the Table* course with Kim Botto and EveryChild Curriculum. [joinamazing.com/everychild](http://joinamazing.com/everychild)



# Greeting & Prayer



## What You Need

- ☐ A Spinning Wheel
- ☐ Prayer Chart

①

## What You Do

Pray for your group before they arrive -> Pray for kids who will visit your group for the first time. Recall a time when God gave you the courage to do something you didn't think you were ready for. Thank God for sending the Holy Spirit to live inside of you and help you take the next step! Ask God to help the kids trust Him when they feel nervous or unsure. Whether it's a big change or something small, pray that kids would know God is with them even when they don't feel ready.

- Choose a child to spin the wheel.
- Each color matches a prayer prompt on the chart.
- After spinning, the child finds the matching prompt, reads it, and prays.
- Let a few more children take turns spinning the wheel and praying.

②

## What You Say

"Prayer is how we talk with God, our loving Father. The Bible tells us to pray without ceasing—talking to Him anytime, anywhere. Whatever you do, begin with prayer. When you do, you can trust that God is in control and working in every situation."

Transition -> Lead your group to the small group activity

## ACTIVITY ONE

# God's Plan

Application Activity



## Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

## What You Need

- ☐ Brown or gray construction paper
- ☐ Prepared gift bag
- ☐ Candy



## Inclusive Pro Tips

Allow kids to “walk the path” in creative ways: crawling, rolling a ball across, or moving a toy figure step by step.

## ① What You Do

1. Before you begin, place the pieces of construction paper across your group area in a winding “path” and place the gift bag at the end of the “path.”
2. One at a time, let the kids take turns hopping, walking, or tiptoeing across the path to get to the gift bag.
3. NOTE: Adjust the difficulty of the path and challenge the kids not to touch the floor!
4. Once all of the kids have reached the gift bag, gather the kids and explain that God’s plan for Jesus was like a path ... every step mattered, but it led to a great gift, the gift of Jesus!
5. Encourage a kid to remove the tissue paper, and distribute the candy/small toys.
6. [Make It Personal] (Share an age-appropriate time when you had to remind yourself that God is good and was working toward goodness in your life when something felt confusing or hard. Share a brief story with the group!)

## ② What You Say

“Great job following the paths, friends! God had a perfect plan to send Jesus, and He made sure every step happened at just the right time. When Gabriel told Mary she would be Jesus’ mother, that was part of the plan! And when Mary said yes, she trusted God’s plan even though she didn’t know all the details. Mary was able to trust God’s plan because she trusted God! Even though she didn’t know exactly how the plan would turn out, she knew that God was good and therefore His plan would be good too.

“There are going to be a lot of times in your life when you don’t know where you’re headed. But you can do what Mary did—you can trust God because He is good. Over years and years and years, God was working on His good plan to rescue you. [Bottom Line] God always had a plan to send Jesus. What He was working on was good, good, good, and He is always working toward goodness in your life too!”

## ACTIVITY TWO

# Verse Postcards\*

Memory Verse Activity

MADE TO  
↓  
Create

## 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



## 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!"

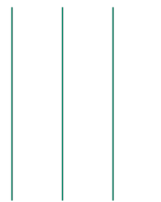
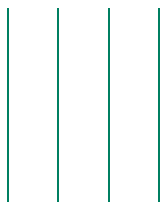
Transition -> As adults arrive to pick up, invite the kids to show off their Memory Verse postcards. Challenge the kids to recite Luke 2:11 to their grown-ups!

### Inclusive Pro Tips

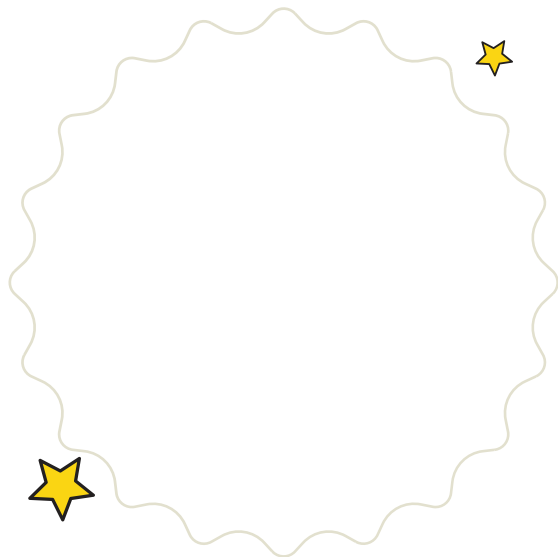


If they prefer, allow kids to whisper their answer to you, and you can "report" it for them.

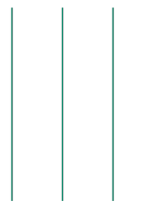
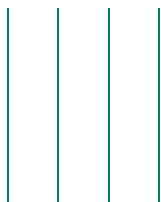
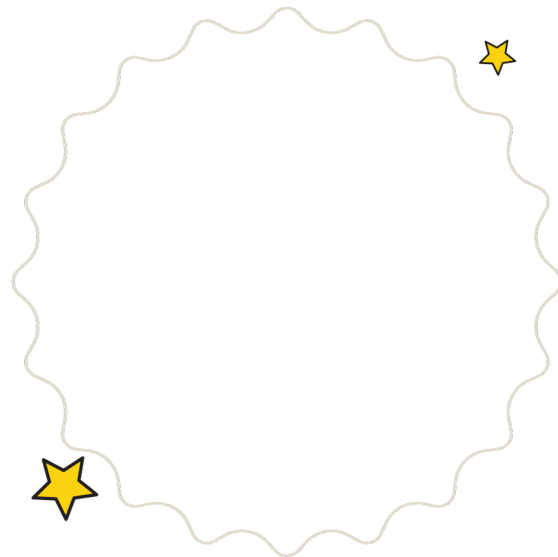
Allow kids to pass if they're not ready to share. Circle back at the end in case they change their mind.



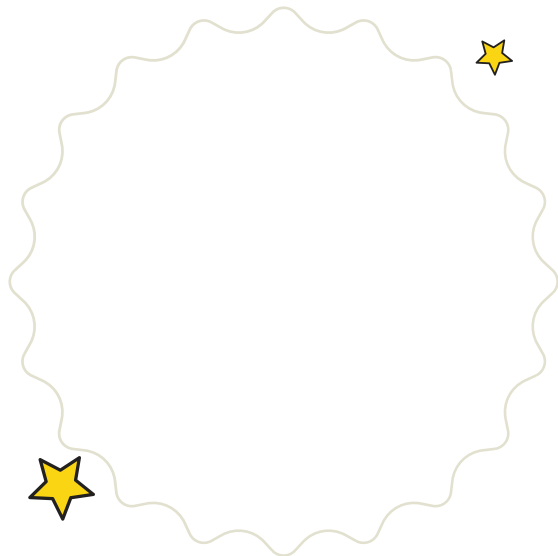
WRITE THE MEMORY  
VERSE BELOW!  
LUKE 2:11



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