

3-6 | December 14

Today's Bible Story: Gabriel Visits Mary • *Luke 1:5-66*

Today's Bottom Line: God always had a plan to send Jesus.

Monthly 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

1. Opening Activity

Pray for your group before they arrive. Pray for kids who will visit your group for the first time. Thank God for His amazing plan to send Jesus and for sending an angel to tell Mary the good news. Ask God to help every kid learn that His plan is always good and that He loves us so much He sent Jesus to be our Savior. Pray that kids will see God's love and goodness even more clearly this Christmas.

What You Need:

- ☐ "The Angel Visits Mary" Word Search Activity Page
- ☐ Crayons or washable markers
- ☐ Optional: small stickers for found words

What You Do:

- Greet each kid by name with a high five, fist bump, or smile!
- Invite any kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
- Give each child "The Angel Visits Mary" Word Search page and crayons or markers.
- Say: "This word search reminds us of the amazing story when God sent an angel to Mary to tell her the good news about Jesus!"
- Encourage the kids to find and circle each word hidden in the puzzle.
- As they find each word, talk about what it means and how it connects to the story of the angel visiting Mary.
- Kids can color the page or add a sticker after they finish the word search.

What You Say:

"Great job finding those words! Each word reminds us of God's amazing plan. The angel told Mary that God would send His Son, Jesus, to be our Savior. Mary trusted God's plan, and we can too! God's plan is always good, and [Bottom Line] God always had a plan to send Jesus."

[Transition: Lead your group to do worship and watch today's video lesson.]

2. Promise Relay

What You Need:

- ☐ "Promise Relay Puzzles" in three zip-top baggies

What You Do:

- Divide the kids into three groups.
- Give each group a zip-top baggie with puzzle pieces.
- Invite the kids to race to put their puzzle together.

- Once all puzzles are complete, talk about how each picture shows part of God's plan (Zechariah, John, Mary, Jesus).
- Remind kids: Just like a puzzle, you may not understand how the pieces go together, but God is always working toward something beautiful!

What You Say:

"Wow, you did such a great job putting your puzzles together! At first, all the pieces were separate and didn't make much sense. But when you kept working, you could see the whole picture, and it was beautiful. That's kind of like God's plan.

"God is good and He is always, always working for something that's good. For hundreds and hundreds of years, even though people didn't understand their parts in God's great rescue plan, God was working on His plan to send Jesus.

"In our Bible Story today, we read about some of the people who were in God's great rescue plan! First, God sent the angel Gabriel to Zechariah to tell him about baby John, who would prepare the way. Then God sent Gabriel to Mary, a young woman from a small town, with the biggest news of all: She would have a baby, and that baby would be Jesus, God's Son! Mary didn't have all the answers, and she might have felt a little scared. But she trusted God. She knew that He was good, and so His plan would be good. She said yes, even when she didn't know how everything would work out because she trusted God.

"There will be times in your life when you go through something hard or scary too. 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. He was working on a beautiful picture! He was working to send Jesus! **[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, toward something beautiful, in your life too!"

Inclusive Pro Tips:

- Omit the "race" portion and encourage all children to work at their own pace and celebrate every accomplishment.

3. Verse Ornaments

What You Need:

- ☐ Bible
- ☐ Prepared ornaments from "Verse Ornaments" Activity Page
- ☐ Crayons, markers, stickers
- ☐ Hole punch
- ☐ Pre-cut yarn or string

What You Do:

- Give each child a prepared paper ornament from the "Verse Ornaments" Activity Page.
- Find Luke 2:11 in your Bible. Read it aloud for the children.
- Set out the crayons, markers, and stickers.
- Encourage the kids to use a marker to trace over the part of the verse you wrote.

- Say, “This isn’t the entire verse that the angel announced to the shepherds, but it’s a very important part. God sent Jesus to rescue you so you could be His friend forever!”
- Invite the kids to decorate their ornaments with crayons, markers, and stickers.
- Once the kids have finished decorating their ornaments, punch a hole at the top and thread the piece of yarn through it so the kids can hang it on their Christmas tree at home.
- Repeat the entire verse from the Bible several times together while they decorate.
- Gather the group together to discuss when everyone is finished.

What You Say:

“Your ornaments look amazing! And part of our Memory Verse from Luke 2:11 is written on it. Let’s look at our Bibles and read our Memory Verse together again: *‘Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you. He is the Messiah, the Lord’ (Luke 2:11 NIV)*.

“This verse is what Christmas is all about. Jesus is the reason for the season! The whole world is throwing a party—even if they don’t believe in Jesus. But every light, every decoration, every celebration is because God kept His promise to send Jesus.

“For a long time, God’s people were waiting for a Rescuer. And then one night, in the little town of Bethlehem, the angel shared the good news: Jesus was born! God had sent His Rescuer!

“When you hang your ornament at home, I want you to remember this verse. Every time you see it on the tree, say these words in your heart: *‘A Savior has been born to me. He is the Lord.’* Because this verse isn’t just for people long ago, it’s for you. God sent Jesus for you.

“So, this week, when you see Christmas decorations, lights, or ornaments, remember our Memory Verse. Remember that **[Bottom Line]** **God always had a plan to send Jesus**, and He did, because He loves you so much.”

4. Pray and Dismiss

What You Need:

- ☐ No supplies needed

Inclusive Supplies:

- ☐ Index cards
- ☐ Coloring supplies

What To Do:

- Gather the kids together in a circle.
- Say: “Today we learned that God had a plan to send Jesus, and He told Mary through the angel Gabriel. Mary didn’t have all the answers, and it might have felt a little scary, but she trusted God. He is good, so she knew He was working for good, so she trusted Him. We can do the same!”
- Invite kids to close their eyes and think about something in their life that feels hard to understand, something they need to trust God with.

- Share examples like: *“Maybe you feel nervous about a test, or you’re waiting for something, or you’re having trouble with a friend.”*
- Say: “Now let’s take a quiet moment to talk to God about it. You can tell Him what’s on your mind and ask Him to help you trust Him.”
- Give kids 30 seconds of silent prayer time.
- Close in prayer.

Prayer:

“Dear God, thank You for always keeping Your promises. Thank You for having a plan to send Jesus at just the right time. Sometimes we don’t understand what You’re doing, but we know that You are always working towards something good. Help us to trust You. When life feels confusing or scary, remind us that You love us and we can trust You. We love You, God, and we pray these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.”

Inclusive Pro Tips:

- Offer index cards and coloring supplies for kids who may prefer to draw or write their prayers to God instead of praying silently! This gives visual and kinesthetic learners a hands-on way to reflect and connect with God.

[As adults arrive to pick up, encourage the kids to share with their parents that God always had a plan to send Jesus. Encourage kids to give one example of something they can trust God with this week.]