



GO TEAM! | WEEK 4 | MARCH 24, 2024

## Preschool Lesson

# Palm Sunday

**Bible Story:** Palm Sunday • We can celebrate Jesus • Matthew 21:1-11, 15-16

**Memory Verse:** “I have called you friends.” John 15:15, NIV

**Key Question:** Who wants to be your friend forever?

**Bottom Line:** Jesus wants to be my friend forever.

**Basic Truth:** I am loved by God no matter what so I can belong in God’s family forever.

### LEADER BIBLE STUDY

Waiting to be picked by a team in grade school is agonizing. If you’re some of the last people chosen by a team, it means while everyone else is cheering, “Go team!” you’re probably thinking something like, “They don’t want me, and I don’t want to be here.” The truth is, we don’t all have the skills to hit home runs or run really fast. And that’s okay. What’s not okay is being unwanted. Thankfully, for all of us, Jesus wants EVERYONE on His team! Jesus wants everyone everywhere to follow Him and be His friend forever. No matter what we can do or can’t do, what we have done, what we look like, or where we live, Jesus is alive, and He wants to be our friend...FOREVER! And that kind of Good News makes us all want to say, “GO TEAM!”

**Story Focus:** We can celebrate Jesus. As Jesus enters Jerusalem on a donkey, the people are so excited that they lay palm branches and coats on the road to make a special path for Jesus while they cheer and shout, “Hosanna! Hosanna! Yay, Jesus!” The people waved their palm branches in the air and celebrated Jesus. And we can celebrate Jesus today and every day because Jesus wants to be our friend forever.

#### **Pre-Service Check List**

- HUDDLE AS TEAM → • You’re in this together! Pray together and talk about the activities for the day.
- PLAY MUSIC
- PUT OUT TOYS → • A welcoming environment is important! We want it to be obvious from the moment kids walk in that they belong HERE!
- PUT ASIDE DISTRACTIONS
- ENGAGE WITH KIDS

#### **Morning Flow**

Doors  
Open  
9:15/11:00

Kid  
Connect  
9:35/11:20

Large Group  
Starts  
9:40/11:25

Small Group  
Starts  
10:05/11:50

## KID CONNECT

### WELCOME TIME

(VIDEO: ARRIVAL MUSIC)

Play intro music in the background as you greet preschoolers and follow the KidCity check-in procedures. Set out a few favorite theme-related toys, such as puzzles and blocks.

### OPENING ACTIVITY

(No Supplies)

Kid Connect time is spent building relationships with the kids. Gather your small group together for some intentional connecting time before Large Group. You can do small activities while you chat together (like coloring or building with blocks) or just sit and listen to each other. Ask your kids relationship-building questions like:

- How old are you?
- Do you have a favorite stuffed animal?
- Do you have a brother, sister, or pet? What are their names?
- What do you like to play at home?
- What's your favorite food/color/animal/ice cream flavor?

Transition to Large Group...

## LARGE GROUP

### COUNTDOWN

(VIDEO: COUNTDOWN)

Show the countdown video as the children clean up and transition to Large Group.

### SETTING UP FOR SUCCESS

(CG: EXPECTATION SLIDE, BASIC TRUTHS SLIDE, MEMORY VERSE VIDEO; BIBLE)

LGL: "Hello my friends! How are you today? Come sit with me. I am so glad you are here! My name is [your name]. I'm excited to spend time with you today! We are getting ready to sing and dance and hear a true story from the Bible. Before we do let's go over our rules and truths.

"Here in KidCity we have three rules. How many rules do we have? (Kids respond.) That's right! Three rules. Let's go over our rules now. (List rules while counting on fingers)

1. Be kind. We can be kind by using our indoor speaking voices, by staying on our blankets (or whatever space you have), and by obeying our leaders.
2. Be safe. We can be safe by walking around the classroom and keeping our hands to ourselves.
3. Have fun! We are going to have SO much fun, and that's because you are here!

“Can everybody follow those rules today? (Kids respond.) Great! KidCity is a place where we learn about God and Jesus! And there are three big truths that we want you to know. Let’s say them all together! Are you ready?”

1. I am made by God. What is it? (Kids repeat.)
2. I am loved by God no matter what. What is it? (Kids repeat.)
3. I am made for a purpose! What is it? (Kids repeat.)

“It’s time for our memory verse. Let’s watch our memory verse motions and do it along with them!”

Show memory verse motion video and then practice without it.

‘I (point up)  
have called you (two fingers on top of two fingers)  
friends,’ (hook index fingers twice)  
John 15:15. (Open hands like a book.)

“Ok, Now let’s sing and worship God!”

## WORSHIP

**(VIDEO: NEVER BETTER, VERY BEST FRIEND)**

Sing the worship songs together.

## INTRO SKETCH

**(Yay Jesus Flag, Prop or Picture, Story Box)**

LGL brings the story box with the props to the center of the room. You should have a Yay Jesus Flag and Prop/Picture for current week (palm branch).

“I have my story box ready. I’m SO excited to see what we are learning about God today. Let’s see what I have in here...”

Pull out flag and prop/picture.

Hold up the flag. What do I have here? (Pause for responses). YES, it’s a flag! A team flag! It has letters and words on it. I’m going to read them, and I want you to repeat them. The first part has letters, J-E-S-U-S. Now you say the letters. J-E-S-U-S. Those letters spell Jesus. The next part has words. It says Yay Jesus! Now you say it. Yay Jesus! Let’s say it altogether now. J-E-S-U-S, Yay Jesus! Jesus wants everyone to be on his team and be his friend! Isn’t that Awesome? Yay Team Jesus! There was one more item in our story box. What is this? (Pause for responses). YES, branch! This is called a palm branch, and it was used to celebrate Jesus in our story today.

Let’s watch our Bible story to see how Jesus was celebrated.

## WATCH THE BIBLE STORY

(VIDEO: BIBLE STORY, BOTTOM LINE)

Wow! Was that a great story? Yes! What did the people do with the palm branches? Yes, they waved them and said “Hosanna! Hosanna! Yay, Jesus!” They celebrated Jesus. We can celebrate Jesus too!

When I ask, ‘Who wants to be your friend forever?’ I want you to say, [Bottom Line] ‘Jesus wants to be my friend forever’ Let’s try that! Who wants to be your friend forever? (Jesus wants to be my friend forever.)

## SAY THE BASIC TRUTH

(CG: BASIC TRUTH SLIDE)

Let’s look at our Basic Truth for today. It says, ‘I am loved by God no matter what so I can belong in God’s family forever.’ When we choose Jesus as our friend, we are on Jesus’ team and part of his family forever.

## PRAY

“Let’s pray together. (Have kids “put both hands up in the air, clap them together once [keep hands clasped], and then lower them down to their lap.”)

“God, thank You for sending Jesus to be our friend forever! Just like the people in Jerusalem cheered and were SO happy to see Jesus, help us to love and celebrate Jesus too! We want ALL our friends to know about Jesus, the best friend of all. In Jesus’ name, we pray, amen.”

## PRAY AND TRANSITION TO SMALL GROUP

## SMALL GROUP

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**Basic Truth:** I am loved by God no matter what so I can belong in God’s family forever.

## HOSANNA

(“Leaves” Activity Page, “Hosanna Label” Printed on Address Labels, Crayons)

What You Do:

During the Activity: Give each child a leaf and encourage them to color it and put the “Hosanna Label” on it. Practice waving it and saying “Hosanna, hosanna, yay Jesus!”

What You Say:

During the Activity: (Give each child a leaf) “Let’s pretend that this (point to leaf) is a palm leaf. Wave it high in the air. (Demonstrate.) Can you move it up and down? (Demonstrate.) How about side to side? Great job! Let’s color our leaves and put this sticker on it.

After the Activity: “We can celebrate Jesus in so many ways! We celebrate Jesus because He wants to be our friend forever.

Use these leaves to transition into the next activity.

## YAY JESUS!

(Donkey Hobby Horse)

What You Do:

During the Activity: Have the kids stand in two parallel lines facing each other. Choose one kid at a time to ride the “donkey” while the other children wave their leaves from the previous activity and shout, “Hosanna! Hosanna! Yay, Jesus!” The child on the donkey will walk between the two lines of kids.

After the Activity: Talk about how the people were so excited to see Jesus because He can do amazing things and wants to be everyone’s friend forever!

What You Say:

Before the Activity: “I’m so happy you’re here today! We’re going to pretend to ride a donkey like Jesus did in our Bible story today while everyone cheered for Him.”

During the Activity: “Everyone will get a turn to ride the donkey. When I say your name, get on the donkey like Jesus did. Everyone else gets to wave their leaves, like the people waved palm

branches, and we'll say, 'Hosanna! Hosanna! Yay, Jesus!'" (Each time, a child rides on the donkey, lead the other children in saying, "Hosanna! Hosanna! Yay, Jesus!")

After the Activity: "In our story today, the people cheered for Jesus because He can do amazing things and He wants to be everyone's friend. The best part is that Jesus wants to be YOUR friend forever! He really does! Jesus wants to be your friend forever. Yay, Jesus!"

## MEMORY VERSE WITH MOTIONS

**(Memory Verse Motions Poster – 1 per group)**

Say the memory verse using motions from the Memory Verse Motions poster. Repeat several times and encourage children for their efforts.

'I (point up)  
have called you (two fingers on top of two fingers)  
friends,' (hook index fingers twice)  
John 15:15. (Open hands like a book.)

## PRAYER

"Let's pray together. (Have kids "put both hands up in the air, clap them together once [keep hands clasped], and then lower them down to their lap.")

"God, thank You for sending Jesus to be our best, best friend! Just like the people celebrated because they knew Jesus was special, help us to love and celebrate Jesus too! Jesus is the best—yay, Jesus! We love You, God. In Jesus' name, we pray, amen."

## CONNECT WITH PARENTS/INFLUENCERS

**(First Look Placemats - 1 per child)**

Hand out placemats to parents as they arrive. Encourage parents/influencers to review the Preschool lesson with their child this week.