



CHRISTMAS TRAIN | WEEK 3 | DECEMBER 17, 2023

## Preschool Lesson

# Happy Birthday, Jesus!

**Bible Story:** Happy Birthday, Jesus! • *Luke 1:26-33, 38; 2:1-21*

**Memory Verse:** “God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son.” John 3:16, GNT

**Key Question:** How do we know God loves us?

**Bottom Line:** God gave us Jesus.

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

### LEADER BIBLE STUDY

*Christmas is such a special time of year! Preschoolers will experience a lot of excitement and wonder. We all do! But as they get older—and as we take time to stop and remember—we hope that the good news that God gave us Jesus will become the MOST wonderful part of Christmas. So get ready because we are hopping aboard the CHRISTMAS TRAIN, and it’s carrying the true story of Christmas!*

Story Focus: **Happy Birthday, Jesus!** Christmas is when we celebrate Jesus’ birthday. As we celebrate the good news that God gave us Jesus, we will retell the Christmas Story again—from the angel and Mary all the way to the shepherds. Oh! And we’ll sing “Happy Birthday” to Jesus, of course!

#### **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**



## 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 to see you here. I love being here with you!"

"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.*

**God** (flat hand with thumb to forehead, pull down)  
**loved the world** (cross arms over chest)  
**so much** (pull hands away from each other)  
**that he gave his only Son,** (rock arms like a baby)  
**John 3:16.** (Open hands like a book.)

"Ok, Now let's sing and worship God!"

## WORSHIP

**(VIDEO: JESUS SAVIOR OF THE WORLD, SILENT NIGHT)**

Sing the worship songs together.

## INTRO SKETCH

**(Nativity Set, Story Box)**

*LGL brings the story box with the props inside to the middle. You should have a nativity scene that includes Jesus, Mary Joseph, Shepherds, and 3 Wise Men. You will use this all month.*

"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 the Nativity set pieces as you talk about them (barn, manger, Mary, Joseph, baby Jesus, Shepherds).*

"We have Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus! Last week we learned that Jesus was born in the city of Bethlehem. Mary wrapped him in pieces of cloth and laid him in a manger. Jesus is God's son. He came to save us from sin and to teach us about God's love for us. This was GOOD NEWS! So good - that God couldn't keep it to Himself. He sent angels to go tell some shepherds who were in a field taking care of their sheep. The shepherds then went and told everyone that God's son had been born!"

"Let's watch our Bible story and learn more about this special baby."

## WATCH THE BIBLE STORY

(VIDEO: BIBLE STORY, BOTTOM LINE)

“Happy birthday, Jesus! Yay, Jesus! Woo-hoo! God loves us so much that *[Bottom Line]* God gave us Jesus! And Christmas is when we celebrate Jesus’ birthday!

“Let’s sing ‘Happy Birthday’ to Jesus!” *(Lead kids in singing ‘happy birthday’ to Jesus)*

## 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.’ God gave us Jesus so we can have a way to be a part of God’s family.”

## 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.”)*

“Dear God, we want to say, ‘Happy birthday’ to Jesus today! Thank You for loving us so much that You sent Your Son to be our friend forever. We love You, God. In Jesus’ name, we pray, amen.”

## WRAP YOUR LEADER

(VIDEO: FUN CHRISTMAS SONG)

(Wrapping supplies for each small group to wrap their SGL)

“Go ahead and go to your small groups, but once you get there, we are going to play a really fun game together!

*Assist kids to get into their small group. While they are getting together, start pulling out your different wrapping supplies (wrapping paper, garland, bows, tape, etc.)*

“Ok! Now, you know that Christmas is next Sunday, so we have to practice wrapping our presents. BUT you aren’t going to wrap toys and such, you are going to wrap.... YOUR LEADER! I’m going to play a really fun Christmas song, and while it’s playing, I want you all to work together to make your small group leader look like a beautiful present! Get it? Let’s go!”

*When kids are ready, give them the supplies and start playing the song. When enough time has passed, have kids stop and then walk around and admire the beautiful creations (take a picture and send it to your campus coordinator!). Collect the garbage and send kids to small groups to do their activity.*

## TRANSITION TO SMALL GROUP

## SMALL GROUP

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## DECORATIVE TOPPER (4’s-5’s)

(“Decorative Topper” Activity Page –1 per kid on cardstock, Crayons)

**What You Do:**

*During the Activity:* Encourage children to decorate their cake topper.

*After the Activity:* Review the Bible story.

**What You Say:**

*Before the Activity:* “What a wonderful day it is to celebrate! Merry Christmas! Jesus’ Birthday is here! Let’s make a special decoration for the top of a birthday cake.”

*During the Activity:* “Decorate your Christmas train with the crayons. (*Pause.*) Great job. Let’s sing ‘Happy Birthday’ to Jesus. (*Sing together.*) Great job, everyone!”

*After the Activity:* “The true story of Christmas begins with a girl named Mary. God sent an angel with an important message for Mary. The angel said that Mary would have a baby and this baby would be Jesus, God’s Son! Not long after that, Mary and Joseph had to travel a LONG way to the town of Bethlehem. When they got to Bethlehem, they stayed in a stable full of animals, and that’s where Baby Jesus was born. That night in a field, some shepherds were taking care of their sheep when an angel appeared in the sky. The angel said, ‘Do not be afraid. I bring you good news!’ And the angel told the shepherds that God’s Son, Jesus had been born and they could find him in a manger. Then the sky filled with angels praising God saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest!’ The shepherds ran as fast as they could to find Jesus.

“God loves us so much that He gave us Jesus. And Christmas is when we celebrate Jesus’ birthday! How do we know God loves us? [*Bottom Line*] God gave us 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.

“God (flat hand with thumb to forehead, pull down)

loved the world (cross arms over chest)

so much (pull hands away from each other)

that he gave his only Son, (rock arms like a baby)  
John 3:16.” (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.”)*

“Dear God, thank for giving us Jesus. He is the greatest gift EVER! 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.