



JOHN THE BAPTIST

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 3:1-12; Luke 3:1-18

FOCUS VERSES: Philippians 2:9; Colossians 1:19-20;
Matthew 6:33; John 3:30

Summary: Before Jesus was born, an angel told Zechariah that his wife Elizabeth would have a son named John. John would prepare the people for the coming Messiah and fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah. John grew up in the wilderness, preached repentance and baptized people in the Jordan River. He rebuked religious leaders for relying on tradition instead of true repentance. When people wondered if he was the Messiah, John said the true Messiah was coming, one mightier than him, who would baptize with the Holy Spirit.



MONTHLY

Memory Verse

But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.

(JOHN 20:31)



BRITE Idea
Jesus is greater than any person.



WHO IS JESUS?

Jesus is God's Son, the promised Messiah. Because Jesus is God, He is greater than any person who has ever lived or will ever live.

HOW CAN WE PUT JESUS FIRST?

We can be humble and recognize His way and His plan matter the most.

HOW IS GOD INVITING ME TO RESPOND?

Kids will be given the opportunity to reflect on the truth they learned about God and respond accordingly.

Pray for each regular attendee by name. Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. Pray specifically for kids who are typically overlooked by others. Pray that they would be made to feel special and valued. Also pray for kids who are typically doing the “overlooking.” Ask God to show them other kids who need to feel valued. Pray that these kids would work to make others feel included and special.

Before Kids Arrive

- Go through your supply tub and make sure you have all the supplies you need for the morning. (we do sometimes make mistakes 😊)

Arrival

Kids will be with their parents for worship and be dismissed to meet you in the Bridge Kids Lobby. During the kids blessing, come to the Bridge Kids Lobby and get your Attendance Book.

Welcome kids and verify you have all kids listed in the book (and that all kids ARE listed in the book. Any kids not listed will need to be checked in by the Welcome Desk).

Big Group

When prompted, take your group to the Big Group Room. If any brought their Bibles, have them place their names on the slips of paper and place in the proper container.

Please sit with your few and help them be good listeners.

After Big Group

Welcome the kids to your group.

Ask: What was the best part of your week? What was the worst part of your week?

Ask: How did God use those experiences to grow you as a disciple of Jesus?

Ask: How can I pray for you (write them on the journal page).

Start With Prayer Requests – this builds relationship.

You will pray at the end of the service





Leader TRAINING

LEADER TRAINING TOPIC: WHEN A KID HAS SENSORY NEEDS

A kid might seek sensory input by rocking, flapping arms, tapping a pencil or displaying other movements that make the kid feel good and help them calm down. If the behavior is problematic, look for alternate activities to meet that need. Determining if a kid is sensory avoidant or sensory seeking is the first step. A common mistake is when a kid is extremely active, leaders assume they need more activity. The opposite might be true. They might need a quieter activity to calm down. Experiment to determine the need.

- **Sensory avoidant:** Many kids with autism are hypersensitive to sensory input. They might be overwhelmed by the noise and activity in your space. Provide noise-canceling headphones or fidgets to meet those needs. Set up a quiet corner in the back of the room with soft pillows.
- **Sensory seeking:** For a kid who is sensory seeking, the hallway is a great place to expend some energy with a relay race or two with their favorite leader. Jumping can also meet some of those sensory needs.

NAVIGATING A BROKEN WORLD: CELEBRITIES AND FAME

Research shows that 73 percent of kids look up to famous athletes, 56 percent look up to TV and movie stars, and 32 percent look up to musicians.* Celebrities have a significant influence on many kids, including how they dress, talk and behave. Many kids also dream of being a celebrity—especially being the next famous YouTuber. In today's story, kids will learn about John the Baptist, who was somewhat of a celebrity in his time. John chose to continually point the focus back to Jesus. If celebrities or fame come up in your group's conversation, gently turn the conversation back to Jesus without either judging or endorsing the people they mention. Help encourage kids to follow John's example of pointing away from himself and pointing to Jesus.

ELEMENTARY GLOSSARY

Messiah: the promised Savior

Prophecy: a message about the future given by God through a person (prophet) to people

Repent: to turn away from sin and turn toward God

*For more resources on this topic, check out: <https://pin.it/2wH60zU9Z>

Small Group ROADMAP

BELONG

(10 MINUTES)

1

Goal: For kids to experience God's love through a welcoming community

IN THE RIVER, ON THE BANK

SUPPLIES: Painter's tape

PIPE CLEANER PATH

OR

SUPPLIES: Pipe cleaners (3 per kid), unsharpened pencils (1 per 4 kids), marbles (1 per 4 kids), rolls of tape (1 per 4 kids)

BELIEVE

(10 MINUTES)

2

Goal: For kids to discover who God is by engaging with the Bible

VERSE BUILDING

SUPPLIES: Bibles, teaching slide, 60 wooden blocks, permanent marker

MOVIN' ON UP

OR

SUPPLIES: Bibles, clear cups (4 per kid), colored cups (1 per 4 kids), permanent marker

3



DISCIPLESHIP DISCUSSION

(10 MINUTES)

Goal: To engage kids in faith conversations that help them navigate a broken world with biblical wisdom

BECOME

(10 MINUTES)

4

Goal: For kids to learn to follow Jesus by applying faith to their lives

JOURNEY TO JESUS

SUPPLIES: Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies, printable page, scissors

COMPASS POINT PRAYER

OR

SUPPLIES: Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies, printable pages, painter's tape

5



SMALL GROUP WRAP-UP

(5 MINUTES)

SUPPLIES: Take-Home page, writing supplies



MOVIN' ON UP

SUPPLIES:

Bibles, clear cups (4 per kid), colored cups (1 per 4 kids), permanent marker

PREP:

None

ADAPTATION FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS: Some kids may have difficulty managing frustration with the activity's quickness. Provide additional opportunities after the group to give them time to problem-solve.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Discuss:** What are some names of people who have done great things in our world?
- Write one name on each clear cup. Divide them into stacks (1 stack per 4 kids).**
- Discuss:** These people have done great things! Is there someone greater than these people?
- Lead kids to find Philippians 2:9 in their Bibles. Read the verse aloud together.**
- Say:** Jesus was given the name above every other name! What are some other names for Jesus? (Messiah, Son of Man, Savior, etc.)
- Write the names of Jesus on the colored cups. Divide kids into groups of four. Put a colored cup at the bottom of each stack and pass the stacks to each group.**
- Say:** Your challenge is to move the colored cup to the top of the stack as quickly as you can, without touching the colored cup.
- Start the game. If kids need help, suggest they move the cups from the top to the bottom. Repeat the game until all kids have played.**
- Say:** Great job making sure no cup was placed higher than the colored cup!
- Say:** People thought John the Baptist might be the Messiah. He explained that someone was coming who was greater.
- Discuss:** Could anyone be greater than Jesus? Why or why not?
- Say:** Jesus is God's Son, the promised Messiah. Because Jesus is God, He is greater than any person who has ever lived or will ever live.



ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

Because Jesus is our Messiah, He is greater than any person. He deserves to be at the top of our lives, like your colored cup was at the top of your stack!



Discipleship DISCUSSION

HOW CAN I KNOW THIS IS TRUE?

Discuss: Why would crowds go into the wilderness just to hear someone speak?

Say: The Bible tells us John the Baptist preached in the wilderness and baptized people in the Jordan River. Archaeology confirms the people and places in his story. Historians like Josephus, a Jewish writer from the first century, wrote about John the Baptist and said he was a good man who baptized many. Archaeologists have also uncovered sites near the Jordan with mikvehs—ritual baths—just like the kind used for baptisms. These discoveries confirm that John was a real person doing real ministry, just like the Bible says.

Read Matthew 3:3 directly from the Bible: *For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said, 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.'*

BUT WHAT ABOUT ... CELEBRITIES AND FAME?

Discuss: Have you ever heard the word celebrity? Do you know what it means?

Discuss: A celebrity is a famous person. Who is a celebrity, or famous person, that you hear kids talking about?

Discuss: Why do you think so many people want to be famous?

Discuss: What do you think God says about that?

Say: Sometimes it may sound pretty awesome to be famous, and it can be fun to follow celebrities or watch their videos on social media. We all have our favorites! But it's a problem when they become too important to us or we let them influence us more than we should. Celebrities are just people. Sometimes we think our lives would be perfect if we could be a famous person or at least live and act like them. But God has created us to focus on Him more than anyone else, even ourselves. Psalm 96:3 says: *Declare His glory among the nations, His marvelous works among all the peoples!* By focusing on giving God the glory instead of giving it to others or ourselves, we know we are focusing on the One who loves us, will never let us down and will always point us in the right direction.



JOURNEY TO JESUS

SUPPLIES:

Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies, printable page, scissors

PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid). Print the printable page and cut it out. Hide the cards around your space.

LEADER TIP: Keep a record of where you hid each card to make it easier to give directional clues. For larger groups, make an extra set of cards, divide your space in two and complete the activity with two groups.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Say:** John the Baptist was a very influential leader. John had his own followers and God had gifted him as a great teacher.
- Discuss:** How has God gifted you?
- Say:** God did amazing things through John the Baptist, and I know He will do amazing things through each of you as well.
- Discuss:** How can we use our talents and abilities to honor Jesus?
- Lead kids to find John 3:30 in their Bibles. Read the verse aloud together.*
- Discuss:** What does it mean to “decrease” yourself and “increase” God?
- Discuss:** How did John the Baptist put Jesus first?
- Say:** John knew that Jesus was and is greater than any person! John pointed people to Jesus instead of focusing on himself.
- Discuss:** How can we honor Jesus in our lives?
- Say:** I hid four cards in our space. I will give you clues to find them.
- Give kids directional clues (e.g., “Take 10 steps towards the window”).*
- When someone finds a card, have them read it aloud. Discuss each scenario together as the cards are found.*
- Discuss:** How can we put Jesus first?
- Say:** We can be humble and recognize His way and His plan matter the most.


ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

Today we learned Jesus is greater than any person. As we learn truths about God, we can respond to Him. We can tell Him our feelings, we can pray, or we can decide to do something or change something.

Lead kids to use the “Me Question” box on their Take-Home pages to choose a prompt and draw/write their response. Allow kids to volunteer to share their responses.



Wrap-Up

CHOOSE YOUR Challenge

Say: We want to respond to God and remember what He has taught us today. We also want to use what He's taught us during the coming week. As we become more like Jesus, our lives change!

Read the challenges from the Take-Home page aloud. Ask kids to mark which one they want to choose for this week.

SUPPLIES:

Take-Home page, writing supplies

PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid).



PRAYER

Dear God, thank You for sending us Jesus. Help us to remember that He is greater than any person there ever was or will be. Help us to trust that His way and His plan for our lives is always best. Amen.



SAY GOODBYE!

Tell kids goodbye and thank them for being a part of your group.

As kids wait to be picked up, encourage them to complete the activities on the back of the Take-Home page. As kids work, ask relationship-building questions, such as, "What are you looking forward to this week?" or "What do you do for fun?"

As parents arrive at pickup, look for opportunities to connect with them, pointing out the Take-Home page their kid is bringing home.

Extra Time?

- Work on Books of the Bible
- Work on Memory Verse
 - **ERASE A WORD:** Write on a white board, erasing one word at a time after the class repeats the verse out loud to you.
 - **BEAN BAG:** Have children toss a bean bag to each other and when they catch the bean bag they say the next word in the verse
 - **POPCORN:** Have children sit in a circle and jump up in turn and say the next word of the verse, sitting down quickly after saying their word
 - **HAND MOTIONS:** Either you or the kids make up hand motions to key words or phrases of the verse. Practice and then have a competition between boys and girls.

Greet parents at the door. Make sure you match their security tag with Attendance Book. Have them initial Attendance Book (their security tag and child's nametag can be given to Welcome Desk for nametag ball.)

Hand each parent:

- Any craft/activity page

BEFORE YOU LEAVE:

After 10:00 Services:

- Erase whiteboard.
- Place Prayer Journal and Curriculum book in supply tub.
- Return Prayer Sheet, KidMin Team Member Report (if needed) and Attendance Book to Welcome Desk

After 11:45 Services:

- Erase whiteboard.
- Make sure chairs are stacked (kids can do this)
- Turn off TV by:
 - Close PowerPoint
 - Power off computer
 - Turn off TV
- Put everything away – all tables should be completely empty
- Place Prayer Journal and Curriculum book in supply tub.
- Return Prayer Sheet, KidMin Team Member Report (if needed) and Attendance Book to Welcome Desk
- Take supply tub to Resource Room



JESUS' BAPTISM AND TEMPTATION

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 3:13–17, 4:1–17; John 1:29–34

FOCUS VERSES: Galatians 2:20; 1 John 5:11–12; Hebrews 2:17–18

Summary: John the Baptist was sent to prepare the way for the Messiah. When Jesus asked to be baptized by him, John hesitated, but Jesus explained it was part of God's plan. After Jesus' baptism, the Spirit of God descended on Him, and a voice from heaven declared Him as God's beloved Son. John later identified Jesus as the Lamb of God, the One who would take away the sin of the world. Jesus then resisted temptation in the wilderness before starting His ministry.



MONTHLY Memory Verse

But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.

(JOHN 20:31)



Jesus is God's Son.



HOW IS JESUS DIFFERENT THAN OTHER PEOPLE?

Jesus is the Son of God. He is holy, perfectly good and never sinned.

HOW IS JESUS LIKE US?

Because Jesus came to Earth as a man, He experienced the same things we do. We can trust that He understands us and what we go through.

HOW IS GOD INVITING ME TO RESPOND?

Kids will be given the opportunity to reflect on the truth they learned about God and respond accordingly.

Pray for each regular attendee by name. Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. Pray specifically for kids who are typically overlooked by others. Pray that they would be made to feel special and valued. Also pray for kids who are typically doing the “overlooking.” Ask God to show them other kids who need to feel valued. Pray that these kids would work to make others feel included and special.

Before Kids Arrive

- Go through your supply tub and make sure you have all the supplies you need for the morning. (we do sometimes make mistakes 😊)

Arrival

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Welcome kids and verify you have all kids listed in the book (and that all kids ARE listed in the book. Any kids not listed will need to be checked in by the Welcome Desk).

Big Group

When prompted, take your group to the Big Group Room. If any brought their Bibles, have them place their names on the slips of paper and place in the proper container.

Please sit with your few and help them be good listeners.

After Big Group

Welcome the kids to your group.

Ask: What was the best part of your week? What was the worst part of your week?

Ask: How did God use those experiences to grow you as a disciple of Jesus?

Ask: How can I pray for you (write them on the journal page).

Start With Prayer Requests – this builds relationship.

You will pray at the end of the service





LEADER TRAINING TOPIC: WHEN A KID WANTS TO ESCAPE

When a kid attempts to escape, their desire might be to avoid a person, task or activity. They might try to run away or behave in such a way where they would no longer have to do a task.

Trying the following ideas might enable the kid to continue participating in the group:

- **Modify the activity.** Rather than attempt to do an activity they feel they can't do, a kid might destroy the supplies or refuse to sit with the group. Consider what the kid is able to do and offer assistance or modification.
- **Offer choices.** Identify alternative activities and offer options to the kid. If they feel they are unable to do the activity successfully, our limited time with the kid might be better spent offering an alternative rather than trying to convince them that they can do it.
- **Help them calm.** If a kid is escalated, attempting to reason with them will be ineffective. Going into the quieter hall or quieter area of your space and offering a drink of water or a fidget might help them calm so you can talk with them and identify what they were trying to avoid.

NAVIGATING A BROKEN WORLD: JESUS WAS JUST A GOOD MAN

Many of the world's religions believe that Jesus was real. They believe that He was a great prophet. One survey revealed 52 percent of American adults believe Jesus was just a good teacher, but nothing more important than that.* Jesus was certainly a good teacher and a great man, but He was also God. You may have kids in your group who are confused about who Jesus truly is because of what they have heard from others or on social media. In today's lesson, kids will learn that Jesus was like us in many ways, except He was also fully God. Listen for kids expressing ideas about Jesus that aren't theologically correct. Gently correct them and point them toward what the Bible says is true about Jesus. While it is hard for us to completely understand how Jesus could be fully man and fully God, we can trust that God's ways are right.

ELEMENTARY GLOSSARY

Holy: set apart; perfect

Hypostatic Union: Jesus is both fully divine and fully human

Sin: anything we think, say or do that disobeys God

Temptation: something that causes us to consider doing the wrong thing

*For more resources on this topic, check out: <https://pin.it/TiZtpV8W9>

Small Group ROADMAP

BELONG

(10 MINUTES)

1

Goal: For kids to experience God's love through a welcoming community

WHO AM I?

SUPPLIES: Printable pages, scissors

SNOWBALL SEARCH

OR

SUPPLIES: Printable pages, scissors

BELIEVE

(10 MINUTES)

2

Goal: For kids to discover who God is by engaging with the Bible

ROCK RELAY

SUPPLIES: Bibles, teaching slide, printable pages, scissors, 2 large bowls, several sheets of blue tissue paper

HULA-HOOP VENN DIAGRAM

OR

SUPPLIES: Bibles, 2 Hula-Hoops, sticky notes (several per kid), writing supplies

3



DISCIPLESHIP DISCUSSION

(10 MINUTES)

Goal: To engage kids in faith conversations that help them navigate a broken world with biblical wisdom

BECOME

(10 MINUTES)

4

Goal: For kids to learn to follow Jesus by applying faith to their lives

SCRIPTURE EMOJIS

SUPPLIES: Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies, paper (1 per 3 kids), coloring supplies, 5 sticky notes

FILL IT IN PRAYER

OR

SUPPLIES: Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies

5



SMALL GROUP WRAP-UP

(5 MINUTES)

SUPPLIES: Take-Home page, writing supplies



ROCK RELAY

SUPPLIES:

Bibles, teaching slide, printable pages, scissors, 2 large bowls, several sheets of blue tissue paper

PREP:

Print or show the Memory Verse teaching slide (Image 03). Print two copies of the printable pages and cut them out. Put each set of verse cards at the bottom of a bowl. Crumple tissue paper into balls to fill the bowls.

LEADER TIP: Use real rocks with one word from the memory verse written on each rock. Fill the bowls with water instead of blue tissue paper.

ADAPTATION FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS: Let kids stand around the bowl at a table for accessibility. If you're using real water, provide towels for those sensitive to getting wet.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. *Lead kids to find John 20:31 in their Bibles. Read the verse aloud together.*
2. **Discuss:** Since Jesus is the Son of God, did He need to be baptized?
3. **Discuss:** Why do you think Jesus asked John to baptize Him?
4. **Discuss:** Where was Jesus baptized?
5. **Say:** Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River. Let's search in the "water" to find the "rocks" at the bottom of our bowls and put our memory verse together! You have to get the verse card out without spilling any of the blue tissue paper.
6. *Divide kids into two teams and have teams stand in two lines on one side of your space. Place the bowls on the other side of the space.*
7. *The first player from each team will run to the bowl, choose a card and run back to their team. The next player in line will repeat the process.*
8. *Once all the cards are found, have teams work together to put the words in order. The first team to put their verse in order wins!*
9. **Discuss:** How is Jesus different from other people?
10. **Say:** Jesus is the Son of God. He is holy, He is perfectly good and He never sinned.

ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

Jesus is perfectly good and has never sinned. His baptism meant something different for Him than it does for us. His baptism showed us that the time for His earthly ministry was about to begin.



Discipleship DISCUSSION

HOW CAN I KNOW THIS IS TRUE?

Discuss: Why do you think Jesus chose to be baptized, even though He never sinned?

Say: The Bible tells us that Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River and then went into the wilderness, where He was tempted by Satan. Archaeologists have found sites near the Jordan River that match early Christian traditions about Jesus' baptism, including Bethany beyond the Jordan, which contains ancient baptism pools and early churches. The Judean wilderness, where Jesus fasted and prayed, is a harsh, dry land—exactly as described in the Bible. These real places show that the events of Jesus' baptism and temptation happened in a real setting we can still visit today.

Read Matthew 3:17 directly from the Bible: *And behold, a voice from heaven said, 'This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.'*

BUT WHAT ABOUT ... "JESUS WAS JUST A GOOD MAN"?

Discuss: Have you ever heard people say, "Jesus was a good man" or "Jesus was just a great teacher?" What do they usually mean by that?

Discuss: What do you think God has to say about that?

Say: Many religions around the world believe that Jesus was a real person, but they don't believe He is God. Jesus was definitely a great man and an amazing teacher, but He is so much more. In Matthew 16:16, Peter told Jesus, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus is the Son of God. Jesus was 100 percent human and 100 percent God. He walked on Earth and ate food and took naps. But Jesus also did amazing miracles and eventually died on the cross and rose from the dead, making a way for us to live with Him forever. The only solution for our sin problem was for a perfect person to die in our place. Only Jesus could fill that role because only Jesus is fully human and fully God.



SCRIPTURE EMOJIS

SUPPLIES:

Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies, paper (1 per 3 kids), coloring supplies, 5 sticky notes

PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid). Write the following references on sticky notes: John 4:6; John 11:35; John 19:28; Mark 11:12; and Mark 10:14.

LEADER TIP: For groups larger than 15, make a second set of sticky notes.

ADAPTATION FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS: Have a list of easy emotion words (angry, happy, sad) to give kids a starting point for brainstorming.



INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **Lead kids to find Hebrews 2:17–18 in their Bibles. Read the verses aloud together.**
2. **Say:** When Jesus came to Earth as a man, He was able to relate to us as humans in a special way. Let's dig into the Bible to find specific emotions that Jesus experienced while living on Earth.
3. **Divide kids into groups of three. Give each group paper, coloring supplies and one sticky note that has a reference written on it.**
4. **Say:** Find the verse on your sticky note, read it together and decide what emotion Jesus was experiencing. Draw an emoji of this emotion on your paper.
5. **Once groups are finished, have each group read their verse and show the emoji. Other groups can guess which emotion was being displayed.**
6. **Discuss:** How is Jesus like us?
7. **Say:** Because Jesus came to Earth as a man, He experienced the same things we do. We can trust that He understands us and what we go through.
8. **Discuss:** How can understanding the ways Jesus was like us help us grow closer to Him?



ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

Today we learned that Jesus is God's Son. As we learn truths about God, we can respond to Him. We can tell Him our feelings, we can pray or we can decide to do something or change something.

Lead kids to use the "Me Question" box on their Take-Home pages to choose a prompt and draw/write their response. Allow kids to volunteer to share their responses.



Wrap-Up

CHOOSE YOUR Challenge

Say: We want to respond to God and remember what He has taught us today. We also want to use what He's taught us during the coming week. As we become more like Jesus, our lives change!

Read the challenges from the Take-Home page aloud. Ask kids to mark which one they want to choose for this week.

SUPPLIES:

Take-Home page, writing supplies

PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid).



PRAYER

Dear Jesus, thank You for coming to Earth as a person to connect with us in a special way. Help us to rely on Your Holiness and the promise that You understand what we are going through, as we trust You with all of our feelings. Amen.



SAY GOODBYE!

Tell kids goodbye and thank them for being a part of your group.

As kids wait to be picked up, encourage them to complete the activities on the back of the Take-Home page. As kids work, ask relationship-building questions, such as, "What are you looking forward to this week?" or "What do you do for fun?"

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Extra Time?

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Greet parents at the door. Make sure you match their security tag with Attendance Book. Have them initial Attendance Book (their security tag and child's nametag can be given to Welcome Desk for nametag ball.)

Hand each parent:

- Any craft/activity page

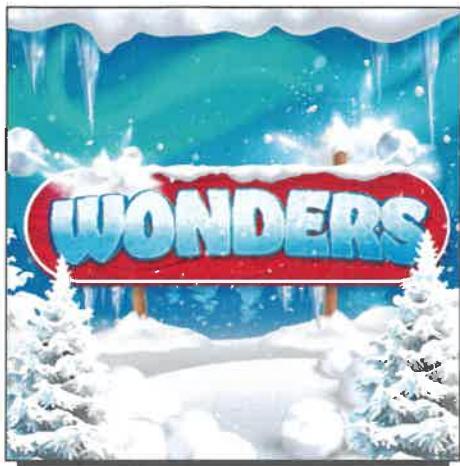
BEFORE YOU LEAVE:

After 10:00 Services:

- Erase whiteboard.
- Place Prayer Journal and Curriculum book in supply tub.
- Return Prayer Sheet, KidMin Team Member Report (if needed) and Attendance Book to Welcome Desk

After 11:45 Services:

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THE DISCIPLES FOLLOW JESUS

BIBLE PASSAGE: John 1:35–51

FOCUS VERSES: John 8:12; 1 Peter 2:21; 1 John 1:3; Psalm 71:15

Summary: John the Baptist identified Jesus as the Lamb of God. Two of his followers, including Andrew, followed Jesus. Andrew then told his brother, Simon (whom Jesus renamed Peter), about the Messiah. Jesus later called Philip, who in turn invited Nathanael to meet Jesus. Though unsure at first, Nathanael recognized Jesus as the Son of God. Jesus continued to gather twelve disciples from diverse backgrounds, who witnessed His teachings, miracles and ministry.



MONTHLY

Memory Verse

But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.

(JOHN 20:31)



Jesus invites us to follow Him.



WHY IS JESUS WORTHY OF BEING FOLLOWED?

Jesus is the Son of God and the perfect example of how God wants us to live. He loves us more than anyone else can and showed that by paying the price for our sin.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO FOLLOW JESUS?

We follow Jesus by trusting in Him as our Savior, seeking to know Him more and more and following His example in how we live our lives.

HOW IS GOD INVITING ME TO RESPOND?

Kids will be given the opportunity to reflect on the truth they learned about God and respond accordingly.

Pray for each regular attendee by name. Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. Pray specifically for kids who are typically overlooked by others. Pray that they would be made to feel special and valued. Also pray for kids who are typically doing the “overlooking.” Ask God to show them other kids who need to feel valued. Pray that these kids would work to make others feel included and special.

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Arrival

Kids will be with their parents for worship and be dismissed to meet you in the Bridge Kids Lobby. During the kids blessing, come to the Bridge Kids Lobby and get your Attendance Book.

Welcome kids and verify you have all kids listed in the book (and that all kids ARE listed in the book. Any kids not listed will need to be checked in by the Welcome Desk).

Big Group

When prompted, take your group to the Big Group Room. If any brought their Bibles, have them place their names on the slips of paper and place in the proper container.

Please sit with your few and help them be good listeners.

After Big Group

Welcome the kids to your group.

Ask: What was the best part of your week? What was the worst part of your week?

Ask: How did God use those experiences to grow you as a disciple of Jesus?

Ask: How can I pray for you (write them on the journal page).

Start With Prayer Requests – this builds relationship.

You will pray at the end of the service





LEADER TRAINING TOPIC: WHEN A KID IS SEEKING ATTENTION

When kids are seeking attention, either positive or negative attention will meet that need. A temper tantrum or escalated behavior might be their attempt at seeking connection. When it seems like a kid is often seeking attention, proactively connecting with them as they arrive and throughout your time together can help minimize outbursts.

- **Be intentional about being one-on-one.** Spending just a few minutes with a kid as they arrive can help fill that need for attention so they don't have to seek it in a more disruptive way. Get on their eye level and ask about their week or what they are doing after church. This is not the time to remind them of previous infractions. Instead, connect with the kid on a personal level.
- **Give alternative ways to get attention.** If a kid regularly seeks attention in inappropriate ways, coach them on new ways to get the attention they need. For example, rather than screaming at you across your space, suggest they stand by you and put their hand on your arm.

NAVIGATING A BROKEN WORLD: FRIEND GROUPS

Research shows that there are many social benefits to kids having a solid friend group. Kids who have a group of friends tend to be friendlier and kinder.* Friend groups provide security for kids, but friend groups also greatly influence kids' behavior. Choosing a healthy friend group is very important in the lives of the kids in your group. Help kids develop friends in the safe space of your group. Facilitate opportunities for them to get to know each other better and build connections. Coach kids when they exhibit unfriendly behavior and strive for every kid to feel they belong. In today's lesson, kids will learn about Jesus' disciples—the friend group He picked to do ministry alongside. Help kids discover the greatest friend groups are those focused on Jesus!

ELEMENTARY GLOSSARY

Savior: the only One who can save us from our sins

Sin: anything we think, say or do that disobeys God

Worthy: deserving of praise because of what one has done or who they are

*For more resources on this topic, check out: <https://pin.it/2p6SThQ2p>

Small Group ROADMAP

1**BELONG**

(10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to experience God's love through a welcoming community

COPYCAT FREEZE**SUPPLIES:** None**REPEAT THE RHYTHM****OR****SUPPLIES:** None**2****BELIEVE**

(10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to discover who God is by engaging with the Bible

COPY THAT!

SUPPLIES: Bibles, teaching slide, whiteboard, several colors of dry-erase markers, die

HE IS WORTHY BANNER**OR**

SUPPLIES: Bibles, butcher paper, scissors, coloring supplies, painter's tape

3**DISCIPLESHIP DISCUSSION**

(10 MINUTES)

Goal: To engage kids in faith conversations that help them navigate a broken world with biblical wisdom

4**BECOME**

(10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to learn to follow Jesus by applying faith to their lives

SPIRITUAL HABITS MATCH

SUPPLIES: Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies, printable page, scissors

PRAYER PICTURE

SUPPLIES: Bibles; Take-Home page; writing supplies; white paper (1 per kid); purple, red, blue and yellow paper (2 of each); scissors; glue sticks (1 per kid)

5**SMALL GROUP WRAP-UP**

(5 MINUTES)

SUPPLIES: Take-Home page, writing supplies



COPY THAT!

SUPPLIES:

Bibles, teaching slide, whiteboard, several colors of dry-erase markers, die

PREP:

Print or show the Memory Verse teaching slide (Image 03). Write the memory verse on the whiteboard using different colors for each word. Leave space underneath for kids to copy.

LEADER TIP: To make it more challenging, use multiple fonts to write the verse. Then kids will have to copy the color and the font of each word.

ADAPTATION FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS: To increase group engagement, kids can follow along and copy the verse on a blank piece of paper with the group.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. *Lead kids to find John 20:31 in their Bibles. Read the verse aloud together.*
2. **Discuss:** What does this verse tell us about who Jesus is?
3. **Discuss:** Why is Jesus worthy of being followed?
4. **Say:** Jesus is the Son of God and the perfect example of how God wants us to live. He loves us more than anyone else can and showed that by paying the price for our sin.
5. *Roll the die and count that many words over in the verse. For example, if a 5 is rolled, the leader counts the first five words of the verse and lands on the fifth.*
6. *Invite a volunteer to copy the word you landed on, using the same color it was written in. They will write it on the whiteboard underneath where you wrote.*
7. *Have everyone say the verse aloud together.*
8. *Pass the die to a kid and repeat. When counting words, skip over the word that has already been copied.*
9. *Repeat until the verse has been completely rewritten.*

ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

You did a wonderful job copying from the example that was given to you. We know we can copy Jesus because He is worthy of being followed!



Discipleship DISCUSSION

HOW CAN I KNOW THIS IS TRUE?

Discuss: What would make someone leave everything to follow a teacher?

Say: The Bible says the first disciples left their jobs and families to follow Jesus. Some were fishermen from the region of Galilee. Archaeologists have discovered fishing boats from the first century near the Sea of Galilee, including one perfectly preserved boat (the “Jesus boat”) that shows how fishermen like Peter and Andrew worked. They’ve also uncovered homes and towns like Bethsaida and Capernaum, where Jesus called His disciples. These findings match the Gospel accounts and show that the people, places, and way of life in the Bible were real!

Read John 1:43 directly from the Bible: *The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, ‘Follow Me.’*

BUT WHAT ABOUT ... FRIEND GROUPS?

Discuss: Do you have a friend group that you spend time with?

Discuss: What can be good about friend groups? What can be bad?

Discuss: What do you think God has to say about that?

Say: Friends are a great blessing from God! He created us to know and be close to other people. As we follow Jesus, it is important to choose friends who help us grow closer to Him. The wrong friends can take us down bad paths very quickly! The Bible tells us in 1 Corinthians 15:33: *Do not be deceived: “Bad company ruins good morals.”* We can choose friends who are fun, share the same interests, show kindness and help us live like God wants us to live. That is the best kind of friend group!



SPIRITUAL HABITS MATCH

SUPPLIES:

Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies, printable page, scissors

PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid). Print two copies of the printable page and cut out.

LEADER TIP: Print as many copies of the printable page as needed so everyone is in a small group or pair.

ADAPTATION FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS: Try to think about pairs when handing out cards. If possible, match kids based on needs (e.g., a shy kid with a more outgoing kid).

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Discuss:** Which do you think would be easier—to be one of the first disciples, or to be a disciple of Jesus today? Why?
- Discuss:** What does it mean to follow Jesus?
- Say:** We follow Jesus by trusting in Him as our Savior, seeking to know Him more and more, and following His example in how we live our lives.
- Lead kids to find John 8:12 in their Bibles. Read the verse aloud together.*
- Discuss:** What do you think “light of life” means?
- Discuss:** How can we follow Jesus today? What are some things we can do to grow closer to Him?
- Give each kid one card. Make sure there is a match for each card you pass out.*
- Kids will move around your space looking for the person who has a matching card.*
- Once they find their match, they will sit down and discuss how the spiritual habit listed on their cards could help them follow Jesus.*
- Bring kids back together and have them share what spiritual habit they had.*
- Discuss:** How might you use the ideas written on the cards to help you grow closer to Jesus this week?

ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

Today we learned Jesus invites us to follow Him. As we learn truths about God, we can respond to Him. We can tell Him our feelings, we can pray or we can decide to do something or change something.

Lead kids to use the “Me Question” box on their Take-Home pages to choose a prompt and draw/write their response. Allow kids to volunteer to share their responses.



Wrap-Up

CHOOSE YOUR *Challenge*

Say: We want to respond to God and remember what He has taught us today. We also want to use what He's taught us during the coming week. As we become more like Jesus, our lives change!

Read the challenges from the Take-Home page aloud. Ask kids to mark which one they want to choose for this week.

SUPPLIES:

Take-Home page, writing supplies

PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid).



PRAYER

Dear Jesus, thank You for being the perfect leader for us! Thank You that we can follow You. Help us to trust You and follow You more each day. Amen.



SAY GOODBYE!

Tell kids goodbye and thank them for being a part of your group.

As kids wait to be picked up, encourage them to complete the activities on the back of the Take-Home page. As kids work, ask relationship-building questions, such as, "What are you looking forward to this week?" or "What do you do for fun?"

As parents arrive at pickup, look for opportunities to connect with them, pointing out the Take-Home page their kid is bringing home.

Extra Time?

- Work on Books of the Bible
- Work on Memory Verse
 - **ERASE A WORD:** Write on a white board, erasing one word at a time after the class repeats the verse out loud to you.
 - **BEAN BAG:** Have children toss a bean bag to each other and when they catch the bean bag they say the next word in the verse
 - **POPCORN:** Have children sit in a circle and jump up in turn and say the next word of the verse, sitting down quickly after saying their word
 - **HAND MOTIONS:** Either you or the kids make up hand motions to key words or phrases of the verse. Practice and then have a competition between boys and girls.

Greet parents at the door. Make sure you match their security tag with Attendance Book. Have them initial Attendance Book (their security tag and child's nametag can be given to Welcome Desk for nametag ball.)

Hand each parent:

- Any craft/activity page

BEFORE YOU LEAVE:

After 10:00 Services:

- Erase whiteboard.
- Place Prayer Journal and Curriculum book in supply tub.
- Return Prayer Sheet, KidMin Team Member Report (if needed) and Attendance Book to Welcome Desk

After 11:45 Services:

- Erase whiteboard.
- Make sure chairs are stacked (kids can do this)
- Turn off TV by:
 - Close PowerPoint
 - Power off computer
 - Turn off TV
- Put everything away – all tables should be completely empty
- Place Prayer Journal and Curriculum book in supply tub.
- Return Prayer Sheet, KidMin Team Member Report (if needed) and Attendance Book to Welcome Desk
- Take supply tub to Resource Room



JESUS DEMONSTRATES HIS POWER

BIBLE PASSAGE: Mark 4:35–5:20

FOCUS VERSES: 1 Chronicles 29:11; Matthew 19:26; Psalm 150:1–2; Exodus 15:11

Summary: Jesus was asleep in a boat with His disciples when a terrible storm struck. The disciples woke Him, fearing for their lives. Jesus rebuked their lack of faith, calmed the storm, and left them amazed. Then they encountered a man possessed by demons. Jesus cast out the spirits, sending them into a herd of pigs, which drowned. The people in the town asked Jesus to leave, but Jesus told men to share what God had done.



MONTHLY Memory Verse

But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.

(JOHN 20:31)



BRITE Idea
Jesus has power over everything.



HOW IS JESUS SO POWERFUL?

Jesus showed that He is God and has God's power. He is omnipotent, and His power has no limits!

IS JESUS' POWER SCARY?

Jesus is 100 percent good and loves us so much. We can respond with awe and wonder at His amazing power.

HOW IS GOD INVITING ME TO RESPOND?

Kids will be given the opportunity to reflect on the truth they learned about God and respond accordingly.

Pray for each regular attendee by name. Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. Pray specifically for kids who are typically overlooked by others. Pray that they would be made to feel special and valued. Also pray for kids who are typically doing the “overlooking.” Ask God to show them other kids who need to feel valued. Pray that these kids would work to make others feel included and special.

Before Kids Arrive

- Go through your supply tub and make sure you have all the supplies you need for the morning. (we do sometimes make mistakes 😊)

Arrival

Kids will be with their parents for worship and be dismissed to meet you in the Bridge Kids Lobby. During the kids blessing, come to the Bridge Kids Lobby and get your Attendance Book.

Welcome kids and verify you have all kids listed in the book (and that all kids ARE listed in the book. Any kids not listed will need to be checked in by the Welcome Desk).

Big Group

When prompted, take your group to the Big Group Room. If any brought their Bibles, have them place their names on the slips of paper and place in the proper container.

Please sit with your few and help them be good listeners.

After Big Group

Welcome the kids to your group.

Ask: What was the best part of your week? What was the worst part of your week?

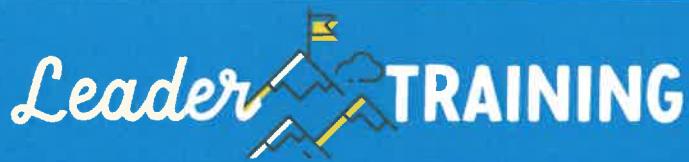
Ask: How did God use those experiences to grow you as a disciple of Jesus?

Ask: How can I pray for you (write them on the journal page).

Start With Prayer Requests – this builds relationship.

You will pray at the end of the service





Leader TRAINING

LEADER TRAINING TOPIC: WHEN A KID NEEDS TANGIBLE ITEMS

Some kids might want a toy, food or an electronic device. Kids might show their desire for an item by hitting, begging, biting or other actions that they believe will help them gain access. Identify what the desired item is, then determine what need that item might be fulfilling for them.

- **Provide a transition item.** Is the kid having a difficult time separating from their caregivers or moving to a different activity? Allow them to have a preferred item (e.g., a fidget, an item from home, etc.) that they can carry with them.
- **Identify the preferred item.** Work with the kid to identify a time they can play with or use this item. Using “first … then” phrases can be helpful. For example, “First we are going to small group, then you can play with [desired object].”
- **Identify the need.** Often there is an underlying need when a kid desires a tangible item. Maybe they are nervous about entering your space, or they have a sensory need and that tangible item helps meet that need.

NAVIGATING A BROKEN WORLD: IS EVIL REAL?

Over 40 percent of people either are not sure or don't believe that Satan is real.* Some neuroscientists believe that they have proven that evil is simply a “glitch” in the brain and not a free choice. Many of us grew up with the devil pictured as a cartoon in a red suit with a pitchfork or as a terrifying force in a horror movie. In children's ministry, discussing evil can be challenging because we don't want to frighten kids. Because there is so much confusion in the world, it is essential that kids develop a biblical worldview of who Satan is and an understanding that evil is very real. In today's lesson, kids will learn that God is more powerful than anything.

ELEMENTARY GLOSSARY

Miracle: an amazing act that can only be done with the power of God

Omnipotent: having unlimited power; stronger than anything

*For more resources on this topic, check out: http://cdn.yougov.com/cumulus_uploads/document/vhyn6fdnkp/tabs_exorcism_0912132013%20%281%29.pdf

Small Group ROADMAP

1 BELONG (10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to experience God's love through a welcoming community

RPS EXTREME

SUPPLIES: None

BALLOON BOP

SUPPLIES: Balloons (several per kid), painter's tape, timer

2 BELIEVE (10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to discover who God is by engaging with the Bible

WATERCOLOR VERSE

SUPPLIES: Bibles, teaching slide, cardstock (1 per kid), white crayons (1 per kid), watercolor paints (1 per 4 kids), water, cups (1 per 4 kids), paintbrushes (1 per kid), paper towels

GUESS THE POWER

SUPPLIES: Bibles, printable page, scissors

3 DISCIPLESHIP DISCUSSION (10 MINUTES)

Goal: To engage kids in faith conversations that help them navigate a broken world with biblical wisdom

4 BECOME (10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to learn to follow Jesus by applying faith to their lives

POWER WALK

SUPPLIES: Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies, printable pages, scissors, painter's tape, worship music, music player

STICKY NOTE PRAISES

SUPPLIES: Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies, sticky notes (several per kid)

5 SMALL GROUP WRAP-UP (5 MINUTES)

SUPPLIES: Take-Home page, writing supplies



GUESS THE POWER

SUPPLIES:

Bibles, printable page, scissors

PREP:

Print the printable page and cut out.

LEADER TIP: If you are unfamiliar with the Bible passages, read them before group time.

ADAPTATION FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS: Select kids who feel comfortable performing in front of a group to pick the cards.



INSTRUCTIONS:

- Say:** Today we are learning that Jesus has power over everything!
- Discuss:** How did Jesus show His power in our Bible story today?
- Say:** The Bible is full of examples of Jesus' power. Let's discuss a few of them.
- Briefly summarize each story so kids are familiar with them. If time allows, have kids look up the passages in their Bibles.**
 - Jesus fills the disciples' nets with fish (Luke 5:1-11)
 - Jesus calms the storm (Matthew 8:23-27)
 - Jesus feeds the 5,000 (Matthew 14:13-21)
 - Jesus walks on water (Matthew 14:22-33)
 - Jesus heals a blind man (Mark 8:22-26)
 - Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead (John 11:38-45)
- Say:** Let's play a game to remember the kind of power that Jesus has!
- Have one kid draw a card from the stack and act out the story on the card without talking. The other kids will try to guess what the story is.**
- Lead kids to find Exodus 15:11 in their Bibles. Read the verse aloud together.**
- Discuss:** Does anyone have more power than Jesus? How do you know?
- Discuss:** How is Jesus so powerful?
- Say:** Jesus showed that He is God and has God's power. He is omnipotent, and His power has no limits!



ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

You did an amazing job acting out the miracles Jesus performed with His power. Jesus is the Son of God, and His power has no limits!



Discipleship DISCUSSION

HOW CAN I KNOW THIS IS TRUE?

Discuss: What would you think if you saw someone calm a storm with just their words?

Say: The Bible tells us that Jesus calmed a storm and healed a man who was suffering. These things happened around the Sea of Galilee, a real place that still exists today. Archaeologists have found ancient towns like Gergesa (near the area of the demon-possessed man), and a first-century boat pulled from the Sea of Galilee shows what Jesus and His disciples likely used. The sudden storms on the Sea of Galilee are also real. Scientists have studied how strong winds sweep across it even today. These facts confirm the Bible's setting and remind us that Jesus has real power over creation and evil.

Read Mark 4:39 directly from the Bible: *And He awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, 'Peace! Be still!' And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.*

BUT WHAT ABOUT ... IS EVIL REALLY REAL?

Discuss: How is "evil" usually shown in movies or shows you have watched?

Discuss: Do you feel some kids might think evil is just pretend or made up by movies? Why would they think that?

Discuss: What do you think God has to say about that?

Say: Some people don't believe evil is real or they think of the devil as a cartoon character who is the opposite of God. Most people don't really understand the devil is real. 1 Peter 5:8 says: *Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.* While some people may picture the devil as a guy with a pitchfork, the Bible tells us he is dangerous, but he is not equal to God. He is tricky and one of his tricks is to make the world think he isn't real or isn't that bad. It is important to know what the Bible says about evil so we know how to stand against it.



STICKY NOTE PRAISES

SUPPLIES:

Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies, sticky notes (several per kid)

PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid).

LEADER TIP: Play soft worship music as kids write their sticky notes and pray.



INSTRUCTIONS:

- Read:** Mark 4:31 and Mark 5:16–17.
- Discuss:** How did the disciples and some of the people in the town first respond to the power Jesus showed? Why do you think they were afraid?
- Discuss:** Is Jesus' power scary?
- Say:** Jesus is 100 percent good and loves us so much. We can respond with awe and wonder at His amazing power.
- Read:** Mark 5:18–20.
- Discuss:** Was the man who was healed afraid of Jesus? How did he respond?
- Lead kids to find Psalm 150:1–2 in their Bibles. Read the verses aloud together.*
- Give each kid a few sticky notes and writing supplies.*
- Say:** Let's praise Jesus with wonder and awe at His amazing power!
- Have them write or draw praises to God. They will be read aloud later.*
- When they are done, they will place their sticky notes on the wall or floor to form a cross.*
- Pray together. Read the praises from the sticky notes as you pray aloud. Invite kids to read their sticky notes aloud if they would like.*



ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

Today we learned Jesus has power over everything. As we learn truths about God, we can respond to Him. We can tell Him our feelings, we can pray or we can decide to do something or change something.

Lead kids to use the "Me Question" box on their Take-Home pages to choose a prompt and draw/write their response. Allow kids to volunteer to share their responses.



Wrap-Up

CHOOSE YOUR Challenge

Say: We want to respond to God and remember what He has taught us today. We also want to use what He's taught us during the coming week. As we become more like Jesus, our lives change!

Read the challenges from the Take-Home page aloud. Ask kids to mark which one they want to choose for this week.

SUPPLIES:

Take-Home page, writing supplies

PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid).



PRAYER

Dear God, thank You for loving us so much and using Your amazing power for our good. Help us to trust in You. Amen.



SAY GOODBYE!

Tell kids goodbye and thank them for being a part of your group.

As kids wait to be picked up, encourage them to complete the activities on the back of the Take-Home page. As kids work, ask relationship-building questions, such as, "What are you looking forward to this week?" or "What do you do for fun?"

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BEFORE YOU LEAVE:

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- Place Prayer Journal and Curriculum book in supply tub.
- Return Prayer Sheet, KidMin Team Member Report (if needed) and Attendance Book to Welcome Desk

After 11:45 Services:

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- Make sure chairs are stacked (kids can do this)
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 - Close PowerPoint
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 - Turn off TV
- Put everything away – all tables should be completely empty
- Place Prayer Journal and Curriculum book in supply tub.
- Return Prayer Sheet, KidMin Team Member Report (if needed) and Attendance Book to Welcome Desk
- Take supply tub to Resource Room