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ELEMENTARY
LEADER GUIDE—UNIT 7

Flexible curriculum that nurtures
lifelong disciples of Jesus

Enduring Faith Bible Curriculum can be used during Sunday School, Midweek programs, small groups, and homeschool—*any time, any day* your congregation meets weekly. With several age levels, the curriculum supports your church’s members at whatever stage of life they are to sustain faith that endures for a lifetime.

LESSON	LESSON TITLE / TEXT
1	An Angel Announces—Jesus’ Birth Foretold <i>Luke 1:26–56</i>
2	Silence before a Son—John Is Born <i>Luke 1:5–25, 57–66</i>
3	The Temple Testimonies—Jesus’ Birth and Presentation <i>Luke 2:1–7, 22–40</i>
4	His Father’s House—Boy Jesus in the Temple <i>Luke 2:41–52</i>
5	The Pointing Prophet—John Points to Jesus <i>Matthew 3; John 1:29–34</i>
6	A Temple Cleansing—Jesus Clears the Temple <i>John 2:13–22</i>
7	The Born-Again Truth—Jesus Teaches Nicodemus <i>John 3:1–21</i>
8	Living Water—Jesus Teaches the Samaritan Woman <i>John 4:1–42</i>
9	The Poolside Sign—Jesus Heals at Bethesda <i>John 5:1–17</i>
10	The Matthew Matter—Jesus Calls Matthew <i>Matthew 9:9–13</i>
11	A Water Wonder—Jesus Walks on Water <i>Matthew 14:22–33</i>
12	A Confident Confession—Peter Confesses Christ <i>Matthew 16:13–23</i>
13	A Mountaintop Wonder—Jesus’ Transfiguration <i>Luke 9:28–36</i>
14	Mission Wonders—Jesus Sends the Seventy-Two <i>Luke 10:1–12, 17–20</i>

ELEMENTARY
LEADER GUIDE

Unit 7: Jesus Comes for Us



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ADDITIONAL LEADER HELPS

MAKE YOUR OWN LIBRARY OF CPH RESOURCES

Throughout the teacher-preparation sections, we have pointed to some key resources that would benefit you to have on hand as you prepare your lessons.

The Lutheran Study Bible (CPH, 2009), also referred to as TLSB

Lutheran Service Book (CPH, 2006), also referred to as LSB

Luther’s Small Catechism with Explanation (CPH, 2017)

Know the Bible Now (CPH, 2016)

Concordia’s Complete Bible Handbook, second edition (CPH, 2013)

ONLINE RESOURCES

Additional resources are available in the online digital resource center at cph.org/digitalcontent, including the Planning Guide, Pastor Guide, Unit Planner, Leader Devotions, Lesson Openings, Social Media Helps, and music resources. Ask your coordinator for access to the materials in the online digital resource center.

ENDURING FAITH PAGES

When you lead a group of such a wide range of ages and abilities as this level is intended for, it’s always a good idea to have something extra for students to do. Depending on your setting, you may have students who arrive at different times. You may have students who finish activities faster than others. Find the Enduring Faith Pages in the online digital resource center and download them for copying. Each page has an illustrated version of the day’s Bible Verse. Have extras of these ready for students to color or decorate in those extra minutes of class time.

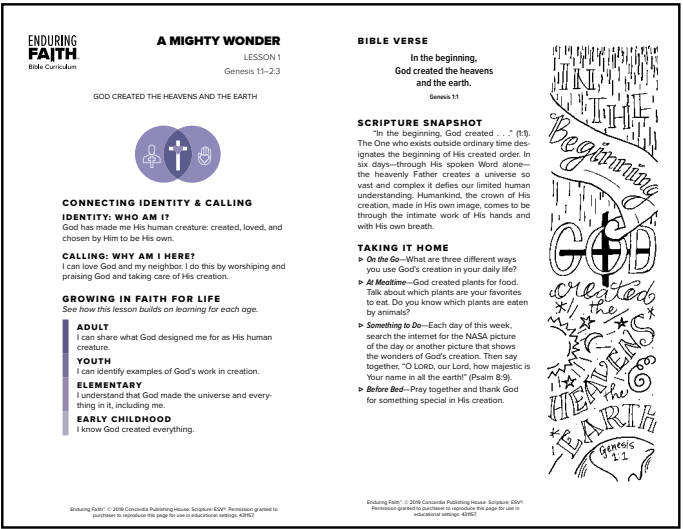
MUSIC

Download music from the online digital resource center. Songs and hymns have been chosen and used over the course of several lessons so students have an opportunity to learn and practice them so they understand and remember them. If you aren’t comfortable teaching children to sing a song, play the music in the background as students enter your classroom or work on projects during the lesson or at the end of class. Together with students, sing along and enjoy God’s Word in song.

MAKE THIS YOUR OWN

We recognize that no two classrooms are the same. Each group of students is unique. Different teachers and students have differing backgrounds and abilities. You may have a large group of students of similar ages. You may have a small group of students with a wide age difference. You may have some mix of both. You may have students who are just learning to read and some who are advanced readers. You may have students who know these Bible narratives well and some students who have never heard them before. All this may change from week to week.

We hope we have provided you a framework of options to share the unchanging Word of God in creative and flexible ways. Choose from the options in the road map of this Leader Guide to make the lessons work best for your students in your setting. Know that we at Concordia Publishing House are praying for you as you do the important work of sharing the precious love of Jesus with His children.



ENDURING FAITH BIBLE CURRICULUM

OVERVIEW

The Enduring Faith Bible Curriculum features a Christ-centered, three-year chronological survey of Bible history with uniform outlines across all levels. The materials have been designed to help you teach the Christian faith in age-appropriate ways, with the goal of helping your students grow deeper in their understanding of God’s Word.

- Year 1 is an overview of the Bible and its major themes, tracing God’s plan of salvation from Genesis to Revelation.
- Year 2 looks at the Old Testament in depth.
- Year 3 looks at the New Testament in depth.
- There are three units per year, with fourteen lessons per unit; this allows for a seasonal lesson in each unit. Teachers can choose to teach the seasonal lesson when Thanksgiving, Christmas, or Easter occurs, or disregard it if they wish to stick with the chronology.
- There are four overlapping levels plus materials for a one-room classroom. Here is a handy chart that shows the focus of the levels and how all the levels connect:

Level	Age Range	Objective	Summary Word
Early Childhood	Preschool through grade 1, nonreaders	Discover the account	Know
Elementary	Grades 1 through 6	Explore the context	Grow
Youth	Grades 6 through 12	Defend the faith	Go
Adult	Grade 11 through adult	Equipped to teach	Show
One-Room Classroom	Preschool through grade 6		

FEATURES OF THE EXPLORE BIBLE GUIDEBOOK FOR STUDENTS

You will need one guidebook per student.

Page 1

- Bible narratives are written in age-appropriate ways.
- Colorful Bible art illustrates lesson narratives.
- Additional interesting facts about key figures are provided in the narratives.

Page 2

- Colorful and engaging visuals and text help students of different ages learn more in-depth information about each Bible narrative.
- For visual learners, there are many and varied pictures. For strong readers, there is additional text to share interesting Bible facts. There’s something for everyone!
- Additional Scripture connections are provided for students who are adept at using their Bibles.

Keep the *Explore Bible Guidebook* in your classroom or with your materials to use every week. At the end of the unit, send the guidebooks home with students for use as personal devotions or for family Bible story reading.

HOW TO USE THE ELEMENTARY LEADER GUIDE

OVERVIEW

The Overview lets you see the biblical foundation of each lesson at a glance. All levels share the same Bible Truth, Bible Verse, Law & Gospel, and Scripture Snapshot, allowing families to learn together. The Learner Goal is unique to each level.

PAGE 1 LEADER GUIDE

ENDURING FAITH
Sunday School - Midwest
Bible Curriculum

ELEMENTARY
Unit 1
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 1

A MIGHTY WONDER

Creation
Genesis 1:1-2:3
Beginning of time

OVERVIEW

BIBLE TRUTH
God created the heavens and the earth.

BIBLE VERSE
In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.
Genesis 1:1

LEARNER GOAL
I understand that God made the universe and everything in it, including me.

LAW & GOSPEL
We forget or even refuse to believe that God is our Creator and the giver of all good things.
God gives us faith to believe that He created the heavens and the earth and that He continues to provide us with all good things, especially life and salvation through His Son, Jesus Christ.

SCRIPTURE SNAPSHOT
“In the beginning, God created . . .” (1:1). The One who exists outside ordinary time designates the beginning of His created order. In six days—through His spoken Word alone—the heavenly Father creates a universe so vast and complex it defies our limited human understanding. Humankind, the crown of His creation, made in His own image, comes to be through the intimate work of His hands and with His own breath.

LESSON PREP

BASIC Read Genesis 1:1-2:3 and notes in *The Lutheran Study Bible*.

MORE TIME Read through the “Challenges for Readers” section in the introduction to Genesis in *The Lutheran Study Bible*, page 9.

IN DEPTH Read *In the Beginning, God: Creation from God’s Perspective* by Joel Heck, especially part 1.

SUPPLY LIST

FOR THIS LESSON

- ☐ Blocks, Lego building blocks, or play dough
- ☐ Drawing supplies
- ☐ Poster paper or paper plates

FOR EVERY LESSON

- ☐ Device with downloaded music
- ☐ Pens or pencils
- ☐ Student copies of *Explore Bible Guidebook*
- ☐ Bible
- ☐ Copies of downloadable activity page
- ☐ Supplies for bonus activities

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DOWNLOADABLE PAGE HELPS

To reinforce learning, each lesson has an extra paper-and-pencil activity page that can be downloaded from the online digital resource center.

Look here for a thumbnail of the page and suggestions for use as well as answers you may need.

BONUS ACTIVITIES

Look here to find a variety of creative ways to complement, add to, or extend the lesson.

PAGE 4 LEADER GUIDE

DOWNLOADABLE PAGE HELPS

Make copies of the downloadable activity page by accessing the digital resource center. Use the helps below as a guide.

Guide students as they draw simple figures in each box to help them remember what happened on each day of creation. Remind them that the drawings are to help them remember God’s amazing work, not for judging their artwork.

Younger students can create simpler drawings, while older students may make more complex drawings. You can draw simple figures in each box along with your students to encourage them to make the artwork in their own style and to the best of their ability.

CONNECTING IDENTITY & CALLING

IDENTITY: WHO AM I?
God has made me His human creature: created, loved, and chosen by Him to be His own.

CALLING: WHY AM I HERE?
I can love God and my neighbor. I do this by worshipping and praising God and taking care of His creation.

GROWING IN FAITH FOR LIFE
See how this lesson builds on learning for each age.

ADULT
I can share what God designed me for as His human creature.

YOUTH
I can identify examples of God’s work in creation.

ELEMENTARY
I understand that God made the universe and everything in it, including me.

EARLY CHILDHOOD
I know God created everything.

BONUS ACTIVITIES

PICTURE IT
10 minutes
Use the picture book *God Made It for You!* by Charles Lehmann to tell the story. If you have more younger students, they might respond better to this method of presentation.

MAKE A MURAL
20–30 minutes
As a class, make a giant wall mural of the days of creation, or make seven posters. If you have a larger class, you could divide into groups and let each group make a poster for one day.

TAKE A TRIP
25–35 minutes
Take a nature walk. Point out all the things you see that God created. Students could try to name which day of creation the sights were created on.

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LESSON PREP

Use these suggestions for your own Bible study as you prepare to lead this lesson.

BASIC Begin here—read the full Bible text.

MORE TIME Go past the basics.

IN DEPTH Gain a deeper understanding of the narrative and its context.

SUPPLY LIST

FOR THIS LESSON Check this list for items you will need specifically for this lesson.

FOR EVERY LESSON Use this checklist as a reminder of items that you need on hand for every lesson.

CONNECTING IDENTITY & CALLING

This section speaks to the universal questions of “Who am I?” and “What is my purpose in life?” from a biblical, Christ-centered viewpoint.

GROWING IN FAITH FOR LIFE

See how the level-specific Learner Goals articulate each lesson’s Bible Truth in a developmentally appropriate way.

PAGE 2 LEADER GUIDE

LAUNCH

PRAY Dear Lord, bless us as we gather to study Your Word today. Help us to learn how You created all things. Amen.

SING “Builder of Everything”
“God, Who Built This Wondrous Planet”
Music can be found in the digital resource center.

SAY What kind of things do you like to build or make? Even when we make things from scratch, we start with some ingredients. Let’s see what God used to create the universe.

LEARN

READ “A MIGHTY WONDER”
Read the Bible narrative aloud to your students, or ask volunteers to take turns reading sections. Fill in a chart in front of the class that records what was created each day.

DO SOMETHING

FOR A LARGER GROUP Review the Bible narrative by having students work in pairs or trios to develop an action to represent each day. Have an older student say the day number and what was created that day, and then have the other students do the actions.

FOR A SMALLER GROUP Use paper plates as your base and have students work in pairs to draw what was created on each day (one plate for each day). Have them hold up the corresponding plate as you reread or retell the creation story.

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- Through your group activity, help students identify what God created on each day.
- Help students see the orderly and amazing way that God made the universe and continues to keep it going.
- God spoke creation into being. It was not an accident.
- Note how God declared the work of each day “good.” God’s creation was made to work together in wonderful concert.
- The high point of this narrative is the creation of both male and female.

LEADER NOTE
If you have confident readers, have them read this account directly from their Bibles.

BONUS ACTIVITY
Check “Make a Mural” on the back page for a fun way to reflect on the days of creation.

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LAUNCH

Start your lesson here by opening with prayer.

If your students haven’t had an opportunity to sing with the larger group, music suggestions are provided here to connect with the day’s lesson. Find downloadable music in the online digital resource center.

Use the “Say” section to engage students and introduce the day’s narrative.

LEARN

Here’s the heart of your lesson, the Bible narrative. Use the *Explore Bible Guidebook* to share the Bible story with your students.

Look in the “Do Something” section for teaching and review activity options.

Use the “Key Discussion Points” to guide you, but make the lesson your own.

All of these are options. You know your group better than anyone. Choose from all the options to make a lesson that fits your students best.

SIDEBARS

Notes in the sidebars provide options to help you individualize each lesson to fit your group.

Leader Note gives options and helps.

Guidebooks reminds you to hand out the *Explore Bible Guidebooks*.

Christ Connection points to Christ in the narrative.

Bonus Activity suggests options for adding to or extending the lesson.

Downloadable Page points to the digital resources to be used at this point in the lesson.

LIVE

Now that you and your students know the Bible narrative, you can dig a little deeper into the context of the story. Use the second page of the *Explore Bible Guidebook* to learn new and interesting facts about the Bible narrative.

Then, use the “Talk about It” section to discuss how this narrative matters in the daily lives of your students.

Use the “Check for Understanding” suggestions to wrap up your lesson.

LEAVE

Send your students out into the world by reminding them of the day’s Bible Truth. Collect the student books for use in the next lesson.

Close each lesson by singing the Doxology or the Lord’s Prayer. Close with prayer.

PAGE 3 LEADER GUIDE

LIVE

EXPLORE THE CONTEXT
Before you start the discussion questions, page the *Explore Bible Guidebook* for further details about God’s amazing work of creation.

TALK ABOUT IT
Choose from the following questions. For a few helps, encourage students to look in the *Explore Bible Guidebook*.

- What is your favorite thing that God made?
- How do you think God could make all this?
- God didn’t stop giving us gifts when He finished creation on the sixth day. What other gifts does God continue to give us?
- What evidence do you see in our world or in your life of how God continues to keep His creation going?
- What are some ways we can care for God’s creation?

SAY THE BIBLE VERSE TOGETHER
In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Genesis 1:1

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- Read John 1:1 to consider creation and the Trinity.
- Help students to see that Jesus was with God in the beginning. The Word was Jesus (the Word made flesh!).
- Reread Genesis 1:2.
- Look who else was there at creation—the Holy Spirit! This is something that may really click for older students in your group. Younger students may not get it just yet.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING
As you close for the day, check for understanding by asking students to review the creation events. Listen for the Bible Truth in their retelling.

LEAVE

SAY Praise God for He created the heavens and the earth. Our verse for today reminds us of that: “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1).

SING “Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow”
“The Lord’s Prayer”
Music can be found in the digital resource center.

PRAY Thank You, heavenly Father, for creating such a wonderful world for us. Help us to care for Your creation and share the love of Jesus with everyone. In Your name we pray. Amen.

DOWNLOADABLE PAGE
Extend learning by printing the downloadable activity page, found in the digital resource center. See the back page of this guide for details.

CHRIST CONNECTION
God built everything, but sometimes we forget that He still takes care of it! Even though we messed it up with our sin, God didn’t leave us on our own. He sent His Son to be our Savior.

LEADER NOTE
Remember to collect student copies of the *Explore Bible Guidebook* for use in class again next week.

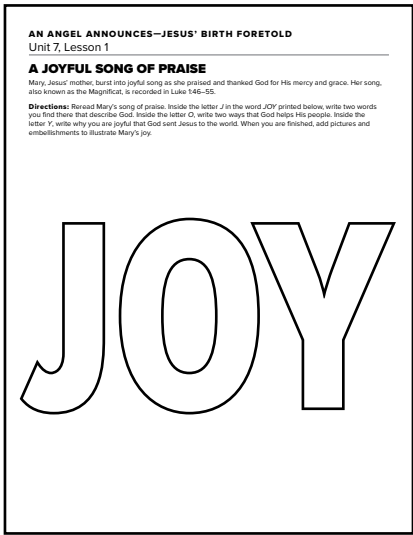
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DOWNLOADABLE PAGE HELPS

Make copies of the downloadable activity page by accessing the digital resource center. Use the helps below as a guide.

Words that describe God in Luke 1:46–55 include **Lord** (v. 46), **my Savior** (v. 47), **mighty, holy** (v. 49), **mercy** (**merciful**) (v. 50), and **strength** (**strong**) (v. 51). Ways God helps His people include **shows us mercy** (v. 50), **exalts the humble** (v. 52), **fills the hungry with good things** (v. 53), and **speaks to His people forever** (v. 55). As students fill in the letter Y, encourage them to think about things Jesus has done and continues to do for them as their Savior.

Guide students as needed. Some may need you to read and write words for them or write the words so they can copy them. Give students the opportunity to embellish and illustrate these letters to show Mary’s joy.



CONNECTING IDENTITY & CALLING

IDENTITY: WHO AM I?

Our God announces the coming fulfillment of His promise, given to Adam and Eve at the fall.

CALLING: WHY AM I HERE?

I can trust God to keep His promises. He calls me to share this Good News with others.

GROWING IN FAITH FOR LIFE

See how this lesson builds on previous learning for each age.

ADULT

I can examine the text of the angel announcement for insights into how Jesus’ birth fulfilled God’s promise in Scripture.

YOUTH

I can describe the importance of the angel’s message that Mary would bear the Son of God.

ELEMENTARY

I understand that God promised to send His Son, Jesus.

YOUNG CHILDREN

I know God kept His promise to send Jesus to be my Savior.

ENDURING
FAITH™
Sunday School • Midweek
Bible Curriculum

AN ANGEL
ANNOUNCES

Jesus’ Birth
Foretold
Luke 1:26–56
4 BC

OVERVIEW

BIBLE TRUTH

God promised to send His Son.

BIBLE VERSE

My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior. Luke 1:46–47

LEARNER GOAL

I understand that God promised to send His Son, Jesus.

LAW & GOSPEL

Like Mary, I deserve nothing from God because of my sinfulness.

God gives me unmerited grace and favor because of His Son.

SCRIPTURE SNAPSHOT

Mary receives an angelic announcement telling her that, despite her virginity, she will give birth to the long-awaited Savior. The child in Elizabeth’s womb leaps within her when the mother of the promised Messiah approaches. Elizabeth rejoices in the reaction and welcomes Mary to stay with her for a time. Mary’s song of praise, the Magnificat, resounds in the Church to this day.

LESSON PREP

BASIC Read **Luke 1:26–56** and study notes in *The Lutheran Study Bible*.

MORE TIME Read the Second Article of the Apostles’ Creed (Part 1) with questions in *Luther’s Small Catechism with Explanation* (2017) for more on Jesus’ two natures.

IN DEPTH Read Hannah’s song in **1 Samuel 2:1–10** and study notes in *The Lutheran Study Bible*.

SUPPLY LIST

FOR THIS LESSON

- ☐ White paper for drawing
- ☐ Drawing materials
- ☐ Poster-size paper or whiteboard

FOR EVERY LESSON

- ☐ Device with downloaded music
- ☐ Pens or pencils
- ☐ Student copies of *Explore Bible Guidebook*
- ☐ Bible
- ☐ Copies of downloaded activity page
- ☐ Supplies for bonus activities

BONUS ACTIVITIES

DA VINCI’S ANNUNCIATION
5 minutes

Go online and find Leonardo da Vinci’s painting *The Annunciation*. Put it on an electronic device to show your students. Talk about when it was painted, what da Vinci included in this painting, and what is not historically accurate. Do some research into the why behind da Vinci’s painting. Look up other famous paintings of this event.

EXTRA! EXTRA!
10–15 minutes

Talk about the old practice of newspapers printing a special edition to report big news. Perhaps even show some online photos of such papers. In pairs or small groups, have students write their own big headline and article to share the announcement of Jesus’ birth. If you have access to a computer, allow students to design their own front page.

HYMN CONNECTION
Times may vary

For students who are strong readers, compare the text of *LSB* 933, “My Soul Rejoices,” with **Luke 1:46–55**. Talk about what the word *magnifies* means. Have students write their own version of this song of praise. Or they could copy the text and illustrate it in a calligraphy style. A recording of this hymn is included in the digital resources.



LEADER NOTE

Since this is the first unit of three in a row on the New Testament, it might also be the beginning of a new Sunday School year. Put out some paper and drawing materials for students to illustrate a name tent. Print on the top, “Hi! My name is,” and let students write their name and illustrate it to show their hobbies, interests, and/or families. Use these name tents again in the weeks to come so everyone can get to know one another.



GUIDEBOOKS

Hand out student copies of the *Explore Bible Guidebook* and turn to Lesson 1.



BONUS ACTIVITY

Check the back page for the “DaVinci’s *Annunciation*” activity to extend the learning in a more visual way.

LAUNCH

PRAY Dear heavenly Father, You love us so much that You sent Your Son to save us. Thank You for loving us more than we can imagine. In Your name we pray. Amen.

SING “My Soul Rejoices” (LSB 933)
“Prepare the Way of the Lord”
Music can be found in the digital resource center.

SAY What’s the best way to share big news? When there is really important news that everyone needs to know, what’s the best way to share it? (Talk about all the ways we share big news.) How about giving that news to a quiet person who is really good at keeping a secret? Is that how you would share big news? God has some big news to share in the Book of Luke. He shares that news in a way that only He can.

LEARN

READ “AN ANGEL ANNOUNCES”
Use the *Explore Bible Guidebook* to read the Bible narrative aloud to your students.

DO SOMETHING

FOR YOUNGER LEARNERS When reporters write on news stories, they try to find out the who, what, where, when, why, and how of what happened. List those headings on the board or a piece of poster paper, then assign pairs of students to report on one of those aspects of the narrative. As you read, have each pair listen for their focus. After reading the narrative, set a timer for students to get with their partner to answer the question, then be ready to report back to the group. Let students refer to their *Explore*

Bible Guidebook, and assist with reading as needed.

FOR OLDER LEARNERS After you have read the narrative once, assign a student or teams of students to consider this event from the different perspectives of Mary, Gabriel, and Elizabeth. Students can write their ideas on paper. Then, have each student or group prepare to tell the narrative only from the perspective of their person or angel. Take turns retelling the narrative from those different perspectives.

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- There are really two events in this remarkable and true narrative: the angel visits Mary to tell her she will be Jesus’ mother (Jesus’ birth foretold), and Mary visits Elizabeth, who is carrying John the Baptist in her womb. Lesson 2 will have more on John the Baptist’s birth announcement and birth.
- Being pregnant before she was married meant that Mary could have lost her reputation, her family, her fiancé, and possibly even her life. In spite of all this, Mary did not question God because she first received the Gospel, the Good News of Jesus who would be born from her.
- Mary didn’t do anything special to warrant being chosen to carry Jesus, God Incarnate, in her womb. It was God’s favor that made her special.
- Ever since Adam and Eve fell into sin, God had been promising a Savior. The entire Old Testament points to this Savior, Jesus, and now finally we hear the Good News that the Savior is about to be born.

LIVE

EXPLORE THE CONTEXT
Before you start the discussion questions, use the *Explore Bible Guidebook* for further details about this narrative, found on the second page of Lesson 1.

TALK ABOUT IT
Choose from the following questions. For a few helps, encourage students to look in their *Explore Bible Guidebook*.

- Historically, this event has been called “the annunciation.” The word *annunciation* means “announcement.” How would you make this announcement if this event happened today? How do you think God would share the big news of Jesus’ birth if it were happening now? Would He still do it in a quiet yet stunning way?
- What do you think Mary and Elizabeth talked about during their time together?
- Jesus’ birth is still a big deal. How can we share this big news now?
- Mary was an unlikely person to be the mother of God. While they’re probably not as dramatic, what are some unlikely things that God has chosen for you to do or might choose for you as you get older?

SAY THE BIBLE VERSE TOGETHER

My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior. Luke 1:46–47

- KEY DISCUSSION POINTS**
- Point out to students the use of the word *magnifies* in this passage and talk about how it is a term of overwhelming joy and honor.
 - The title “God my Savior” is often used for God, especially in the Psalms. Here, we see a connection yet again between the Old and New Testaments and Mary’s expectation of the coming Savior. This section is also very closely tied to Hannah’s prayer in **1 Samuel 2:1–10**.
 - Everything that happens in this narrative is a joyful response to the presence of God in the flesh.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING
Ask students to tell you their favorite part of this narrative.

LEAVE

SAY God promised to send His Son to be our Savior. He made that promise to Adam and Eve. All through the Old Testament, He protected His people so that He could keep His promise. Today, we learned how God used Mary and Elizabeth to fulfill His promise to all of us.

SING The Doxology, “Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow”
“The Lord’s Prayer”
Music can be found in the digital resource center.

PRAY Dear Lord, thank You for fulfilling Your promise of a Savior in Jesus to be God in the flesh. This is amazing news! Help us to be like Mary and receive all these blessings in faith. In Your name we pray, Jesus. Amen.



DOWNLOADABLE PAGE
Extend learning by printing the downloadable activity page found in the digital resource center. Details are found on the back page of this guide.



CHRIST CONNECTION
God visited Mary and made her a great promise. That promise has been fulfilled for us in Jesus.



LEADER NOTE
Remember to collect the *Explore Bible Guidebooks* for use in class again next week and throughout the unit.

DOWNLOADABLE PAGE HELPS

Make copies of the downloadable activity page by accessing the digital resource center. Use the helps below as a guide.

Direct students to the Scripture verses listed as they fill in the birth announcement information. You can have the Scripture passages bookmarked in their Bibles or have them use a Bible app or read them aloud for the group. Take note that John had no siblings. His unique quality was that he was “filled with the Holy Spirit.” John’s future career would include leading people to repent of their sins and preparing them for Jesus’ coming.

Encourage students to illustrate the front of the announcement with a scene described in the lesson text. They may choose to show the angel talking to Zechariah or Elizabeth holding the newborn John as Zechariah writes on a tablet, “His name is John” (Luke 1:63).

SILENCE BEFORE A SON—JOHN IS BORN
Unit 7, Lesson 2

A JOYFUL BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT
When a child is born, the new parents often share their joy with family and friends through handwritten or computer-generated birth announcements.

Directions: Fill in the missing information on the birth announcement below as Zechariah would have when his child was born. Then cut out the announcement on the dark black outline. Fold the top half over the bottom half on the dotted line. Illustrate the front of the card using Luke 15–25, 57–66 as a guide.

Zechariah the priest and his wife _____
joyfully announce the birth of their child! (See Luke 15.)

Name: (See Luke 1:63, 60, 63) _____

Siblings: (See Luke 1:7) _____

Unique quality: (See Luke 1:67) _____

Future career: (See Luke 1:67) _____



CONNECTING IDENTITY & CALLING

IDENTITY: WHO AM I?

God sends His messengers to His people, and they bring His Word to all humankind.

CALLING: WHY AM I HERE?

I can trust the promises given by God’s messengers.

GROWING IN FAITH FOR LIFE

See how this lesson builds on previous learning for each age.

ADULT

I can describe how the events surrounding John the Baptist’s birth relate to key Old Testament themes and promises of God.

YOUTH

I can show how John was God’s promised messenger who pointed to Jesus.

ELEMENTARY

I understand that God sent John as His messenger.

YOUNG CHILDREN

I know God sent John to get people ready for Jesus.

ENDURING
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ELEMENTARY
Unit 7
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 2

SILENCE
BEFORE A SON

John Is Born
Luke 1:5–25,
57–66
3 BC

OVERVIEW

BIBLE TRUTH

God sent John as His messenger.

BIBLE VERSE

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited and redeemed His people. Luke 1:68

LEARNER GOAL

I understand that God sent John as His messenger.

LAW & GOSPEL

As a child of the first parents, Adam and Eve, I am sinful and in need of salvation.

John, and others who proclaim the Good News, point me to Jesus, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.

SCRIPTURE SNAPSHOT

Doubting the angel’s announcement of his coming son, Zechariah finds himself silenced until the boy’s birth. Upon writing, “His name is John,” Zechariah regains his voice and prophesies concerning his son’s work.

LESSON PREP

BASIC Read the text and study notes in *The Lutheran Study Bible*.

MORE TIME Read Zechariah’s prophecy and study notes in **Luke 1:67–80** in *The Lutheran Study Bible*.

IN DEPTH Read the article “The Temple in Luke” in *The Lutheran Study Bible*, page 1705.

SUPPLY LIST

FOR THIS LESSON

☐ Poster-size paper and markers

FOR EVERY LESSON

- ☐ Device with downloaded music
- ☐ Pens or pencils
- ☐ Student copies of *Explore Bible Guidebook*
- ☐ Bible
- ☐ Copies of downloaded activity page
- ☐ Supplies for bonus activities

BONUS ACTIVITIES

LEAP FOR JOY

5 minutes

In Lesson 1, we learned that Elizabeth said that the baby in her womb (John) leaped when Mary (who was pregnant with Jesus) entered the room. You can leap for joy too! Line up your group and have each person take a big leap after naming a blessing God has given him or her. Keep going until everyone has leaped several times.

HIS NAME IS JOHN

10 minutes

Using black construction paper mounted on cardstock or cardboard and white chalk or crayons, have students write, “His name is John,” as Zechariah did. Have students use these to practice retelling the narrative to one another and their families. They could decorate the border with arrows to show that John was here to point the way to Jesus.

BABIES PREP COLLECTION

Times may vary

Lessons 1 and 2 deal with preparing for very special babies. Help those in your community who struggle to make preparations for their babies because of difficult circumstances. Find a local crisis pregnancy center and ask what supplies it needs. Have your class make posters and, together with your congregation, collect baby items to donate.



BONUS ACTIVITY

Use the “Leap for Joy” bonus activity on the back page to review Lesson 1, burn off energy, and use gross motor skills in preparation for Lesson 2.



GUIDEBOOKS

Hand out student copies of the *Explore Bible Guidebook* and turn to Lesson 2.



LEADER NOTE

You may have noticed that this unit is starting out with Bible narratives that have been traditionally taught in Advent, even though it may or may not be December for the user. These lessons go chronologically through the New Testament, but you have the freedom to teach them whenever they work best for your situation.

LAUNCH

PRAY Dear Lord Jesus, thank You for bringing us together to study Your Word. Help us to grow in our understanding of You and in our care for one another. In Your name we pray. Amen.

SING “My Soul Rejoices” (*LSB* 933)
“Prepare the Way of the Lord”
Music can be found in the digital resource center.

SAY What does it mean when someone tells you to get ready? What do you do to get ready for a party? for school? for church? to go on vacation? for a piano or music recital? for a big sports game or meet? You do different things to get ready for different events, right? Today, we’re going to learn about who God sent to help the world get ready for Jesus.

LEARN

READ “SILENCE BEFORE A SON”

Use the *Explore Bible Guidebook* to read the Bible narrative aloud to your students.

DO SOMETHING

FOR ALL LEARNERS Review with students what they remember about the Old Testament, particularly the prophets who pointed toward the coming Savior. Help them see that John the Baptist is here to do the same thing, sort of like a bridge between the Old and New Testaments. Remind students that it has been hundreds of years since the Lord has sent a prophet or an angel.

FOR YOUNG LEARNERS Have children take turns acting out the parts of Zechariah, Gabriel, Elizabeth, and their friends and family.

FOR OLDER LEARNERS Students who are strong readers can read this narrative directly from Scripture. After you have read it together as a group, talk about the events, then divide students into pairs or small groups to sketch out the events of the narrative on poster paper in story-board form.

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- Note that the very beginning of this narrative actually appears in the Book of Luke before the section from Lesson 1. Lessons 1 and 2 of this unit are interconnected and not necessarily sequential. Mary’s visit to Elizabeth when Elizabeth is about six months pregnant is included in Lesson 1. Remind students of this event as you talk about today’s lesson.
- There’s a lot going on in this narrative. Zechariah is visited by an angel and then, because he doubts the angel’s message, he is made mute. Zechariah and Elizabeth have a baby, even though they are much too old to do so under normal circumstances. When the baby is born, instead of naming the child after himself (the baby’s father), Zechariah names the baby John as God has told him to do.
- In Luke 1:17, John is compared to Elijah. Once again, we see this connector between the Old and New Testaments. Elijah preached a message of repentance, and so does John. Point out that if you don’t realize that you need a Savior, you won’t realize what a big deal it is to have one.

LIVE

EXPLORE THE CONTEXT

Before you start the discussion questions, use the *Explore Bible Guidebook* for further details about this narrative, found on the second page of Lesson 2.

TALK ABOUT IT

Choose from the following questions. For a few helps, encourage students to look in their *Explore Bible Guidebook*.

- God’s people have been waiting a very long time for the promised Messiah. Why would they need to get ready? Shouldn’t they already be ready? Do you sometimes need somebody to help you get ready? Who are the people that help us get ready for Jesus? Can you be that person for someone else?
- Being visited by an angel is a big deal. Most of the time, angels start their conversation with the words “Fear not.” Why do you suppose that is? How would you react to seeing an angel?
- How does God send us His message today? (Through His Word, the Holy Bible)
- Zechariah had doubts, even when an angel came directly from God. We might have doubts too, but God forgives us for Jesus’ sake. Regardless of how we feel or what doubts we have, God’s Word is true. His forgiveness is real. What can we do when we have doubts about God’s love for us? (We can talk to someone like our pastor, a teacher, or our family; we can look to God’s Word.)

SAY THE BIBLE VERSE TOGETHER

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited and redeemed His people. Luke 1:68

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- God promised Adam and Eve that He would send a Savior to redeem His people and pay the price for their sin. Throughout the Old Testament, God keeps His promises and blesses His people.
- The same is true today. God has visited us in Jesus and continues to bless His people through the work of the Holy Spirit.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Sometimes we send messages by writing a little note. Ask students to imagine that John had a note attached to his baby blanket, since he would be God’s messenger. Ask them to write (or tell you) what that message would say.

LEAVE

SAY John wasn’t just any baby. God sent John to be His special messenger to prepare the way for Jesus so that we can know our Savior.

SING The Doxology, “Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow”
“The Lord’s Prayer”
Music can be found in the digital resource center.

PRAY Dear Lord God, heavenly Father, thank You for sending John to prepare the world for Jesus. Thank you for keeping Your promise to send a Savior, Your Son, Jesus. We love You, Lord. Amen.



DOWNLOADABLE PAGE

Extend learning and review key facts about John by printing the downloadable activity page found in the digital resource center. Details are found on the back page of this guide.



CHRIST CONNECTION

John was God’s special messenger who came to point the way to the Messiah, Jesus Christ.