

WEEK

ONE

Small Group Leader Guide

Today's Suggested Schedule

The toddler curriculum provides one monthly Bible Story because we understand that toddlers learn best through repetition. The toddler curriculum provides older toddlers with the story and craft elements that some are ready to experience before they enter the twos. We hope that by sending home a simple toddler craft, you are cueing families to begin having conversations at home with their children.

Story Time

→ Tell It

Craft Time

→ Handprint Manger

THIS MONTH
↓



Today's Bible Story

Jesus is Born
Luke 2:1-7

Bottom Line

God loves me.

Memory Verse

**"God loved the world so
much that he gave his
only Son."
John 3:16 GNT**

Story Time

What You Need

- ☐ Preschool Bible

① What You Do

1. Gather children on a rug or in a specific area of the classroom to tell the story. Some children (especially the younger ones) may wander. That's okay. They're still listening and learning!

② What You Say

LEADER: "Hello, friends! I'm so glad to see you today. Come join me on the floor. Today's true story from the Bible (***hold up the Bible***) is the true story of Christmas! Merry Christmas, everyone! Our story begins when Mary and Joseph traveled a long, long way to the town of Bethlehem.

"Mary was about to have a baby so she may have ridden a donkey. Once Mary and Joseph got to Bethlehem, they stayed in a place that had a manger. A manger is something animals eat out of. So there might have been some animals there too! This is where a very special baby was born, God's Son, Jesus! Mary wrapped Jesus in strips of cloth and laid Him in a manger. Happy Birthday, Jesus! Jesus is the best gift ever! God loves us so much that [***Bottom Line***] God gave us Jesus."

Craft Time

What You Need

- ☐ "Handprint Manger" Activity Page
- ☐ "Handprint Manger Jesus" Activity Page
- ☐ Cardstock
- ☐ Brown washable paint
- ☐ Paper plates
- ☐ Paint brushes
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Baby wipes
- ☐ Permanent marker

① What You Do

1. Gather small groups of children around you at a table for toddler craft time.
2. Depending on the size of your group, you may lead the craft two or three times. Not every child may want to participate in craft time. That's okay. Feel free to send home the craft materials for them to complete with their mom or dad.

Before the Activity

1. Copy "Handprint Manger" on cardstock, one per child.
2. Copy "Handprint Manger Jesus" on cardstock and cut, one cutout per child.
3. Write each child's name on their paper.

During the Activity

4. Help cover each child's hand with brown paint and press down in the center of their paper.
5. Clean hands.
6. Help children add their Jesus cutout to the center of their handprint.

② What You Say

During the Activity

"Jesus was born in a place with a manger. Let's make a manger with your handprint. I'll paint your whole hand brown then we'll place it on your paper upside down to make a handprint manger! ***(Paint child's hand and press it on their paper with the fingers pointing down. Clean hands.)*** Mary wrapped Jesus in cloths and laid him in the manger. Press your picture of baby Jesus on your handprint. ***(Pause.)*** Great job! Jesus is the best gift ever! God loves us so much that ***[Bottom Line]*** God gave us Jesus."

WEEK

TWO

Small Group Leader Guide

Today's Suggested Schedule

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Story Time

→ Show It

Craft Time

→ Best Gift Headband

THIS MONTH
↓



Today's Bible Story

Jesus is Born
Luke 2:1-7

Bottom Line

God loves me.

Memory Verse

**"God loved the world so
much that he gave his
only Son."
John 3:16 GNT**

Story Time

What You Need

- ☐ Preschool Bible
- ☐ "Story Pictures" Activity Pages copied on cardstock

① What You Do

1. Gather children on a rug or in a specific area of the classroom to tell the story. Some children (especially the younger ones) may wander. That's okay. They're still listening and learning!

② What You Say

LEADER: "Hello, friends! I'm so glad to see you today. Come join me on the floor. Today's true story from the Bible (**hold up the Bible**) begins with Mary and Joseph (**hold up the picture of Mary and Joseph**) and the true story of Christmas. Mary and Joseph traveled a long, long way to the town of Bethlehem.

"Mary was about to have a baby so she may have ridden a donkey. (**Hold up the picture of Mary and Joseph traveling.**) Once Mary and Joseph got to Bethlehem, they stayed in a place that had a manger. (**Hold up the picture of the manger.**) A manger is something animals eat out of. So there might have been some animals there too! (**Hold up the picture of animals.**) This is where Jesus, God's Son, was born! Mary wrapped Jesus up and laid Him in a manger. (**Hold up the picture of Jesus in the manger.**) Jesus is the best gift ever! God loves us so much that **[Bottom Line]** God gave us Jesus. Happy Birthday, Jesus!"

Craft Time

What You Need

- ☐ "Best Gift Headband" Activity Page
- ☐ Cardstock
- ☐ Dotmarkers
- ☐ Self-inking stamps
- ☐ Sentence strips
- ☐ Glue sticks
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Stapler
- ☐ Clear tape
- ☐ Baby wipes
- ☐ Permanent marker

① What You Do

1. Gather small groups of children around you at a table for toddler craft time.
2. Depending on the size of your group, you may lead the craft two or three times. Not every child may want to participate in craft time. That's okay. Feel free to send home the craft materials for them to complete with their mom or dad.

Before the Activity

1. Copy "Best Gift Headband" on cardstock and cut, one cutout per child.
2. Glue the cutout to the middle of each child's sentence strip and write their name.

During the Activity

1. Encourage children to decorate their picture and headband with markers and stamps.
2. Clean hands as needed.
3. Measure each child's headband around their head and staple the ends together with the bend closure facing out.
4. Place a piece of tape over the staple closure.
5. Encourage children to wear their headbands home.

② What You Say

During the Activity

"Today in our story, we learned that God gave us a very special gift, **[Bottom Line]** God gave us Jesus! Jesus is the best gift! We are going to make a headband to wear home to celebrate Jesus. Use the markers and stamps to decorate your headband. **(Pause.)** Fantastic! Now I'm going to measure it around your head and fasten the ends. **(Measure around their head, staple, and add a piece of tape over the staple closure.)** Put your headbands on and let's sing Happy Birthday to Jesus! **(Sing together with children.)** Yay! Happy Birthday, Jesus! Jesus is the best gift ever! God loves us so much that **[Bottom Line]** God gave us Jesus."

WEEK

THREE

Small Group Leader Guide

Today's Suggested Schedule

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Story Time

→ Draw it

Craft Time

→ Hanging Gift

THIS MONTH
↓



Today's Bible Story

Jesus is Born
Luke 2:1-7

Bottom Line

God loves me.

Memory Verse

"God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son."
John 3:16 GNT

Story Time

What You Need

- ☐ Preschool Bible
- ☐ Butcher paper
- ☐ Washable markers

① What You Do

1. Gather children on a rug or in a specific area of the classroom to tell the story. Some children (especially the younger ones) may wander. That's okay. They're still listening and learning!

② What You Say

LEADER: "Hello, friends! I'm so glad to see you today. Come join me on the floor. Today's true story from the Bible (**hold up the Bible**) begins with Mary and Joseph (**draw a simple stick figure of pregnant Mary and Joseph**) and the true story of Christmas. Mary and Joseph traveled a long, long way to the town of Bethlehem. (**Draw a long path.**)

"Mary was about to have a baby so she may have ridden a donkey. (**Draw simple stick figure pregnant Mary on a donkey and Joseph near.**) Once Mary and Joseph got to Bethlehem, they stayed in a place that had a manger. (**Draw a simple manger.**) A manger is something animals eat out of. So there might have been some animals there too! (**Draw a simple cow, sheep, and horse.**) This is where Jesus, God's Son, was born! Mary wrapped Jesus up and laid Him in a manger. (**Draw a simple shape baby Jesus in the manger.**) Jesus is the best gift ever! (**Draw a square around baby Jesus in the manger with a bow on top.**) God loves us so much that [**Bottom Line**] God gave us Jesus. Happy Birthday, Jesus!"

Craft Time

What You Need

- ☐ "Hanging Gift" Activity Page
- ☐ Cardstock
- ☐ Small jewelry-sized gift boxes, one half per child
- ☐ Yellow paper shreds
- ☐ Yarn
- ☐ Craft glue
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Baby wipes
- ☐ Permanent marker

① What You Do

1. Gather small groups of children around you at a table for toddler craft time.
2. Depending on the size of your group, you may lead the craft two or three times. Not every child may want to participate in craft time. That's okay. Feel free to send home the craft materials for them to complete with their mom or dad.

Before the Activity

1. Copy "Hanging Gift" on cardstock and cut, one per child.
2. Cut yarn in 10-inch lengths, one per child.
3. For each child's box, create a small hole in the middle of one of the long sides. Knot the ends of each length of yarn and slide one piece through each hole, with the knotted end inside the box.
4. Write each child's name on the back of their box half.

During the Activity

1. Drizzle some glue inside the box and encourage children to press some paper shreds inside.
2. Drizzle a little more glue and ask children to add their baby Jesus.
3. Clean hands as needed.

② What You Say

During the Activity

"Today we heard the true story of Christmas when baby Jesus was born! Let's make a manger ornament. I'm going to put some glue inside this box, and I want you to take some of those paper shreds and press them inside. **(Pause.)** Great! Now let me add a little more glue and you can add baby Jesus. **(Pause.)** Nice! **(Hold up the ornament.)** God loves us so much that **[Bottom Line]** God gave us Jesus."

WEEK

FOUR

Small Group Leader Guide

Today's Suggested Schedule

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Story Time

→ Act it

Craft Time

→ Best Gift Book

THIS MONTH



Today's Bible Story

Jesus is Born
Luke 2:1-7

Bottom Line

God loves me.

Memory Verse

**"God loved the world so
much that he gave his
only Son."
John 3:16 GNT**

Story Time

What You Need

- ☐ Preschool Bible
- ☐ Little People® Nativity

① What You Do

1. Gather children on a rug or in a specific area of the classroom to tell the story. Some children (especially the younger ones) may wander. That's okay. They're still listening and learning!

② What You Say

LEADER: "Hello, friends! I'm so glad to see you today. Come join me on the floor. **(Place the Nativity in front of you.)** I need your help telling our Bible Story today. Today's true story from the Bible **(hold up the Bible)** is the true story of Christmas.

"Our story begins with Mary **(hold up Mary figure)** and Joseph **(hold up Joseph figure)** had to travel a long way to Bethlehem, so Mary rode a donkey. **(Walk Joseph and Mary on a donkey in front of you.)** When they got there, they stayed in a place with a manger **(Hold up or point to the manger.)** A manger is what animals eat from, so there may have been animals there too. **(Pick up each animal.)** Like a horse, a cow, or a sheep! This is where baby Jesus was born! **(Put Jesus in the manger between Mary and Joseph.)** Mary wrapped Jesus in cloths and laid Him in a manger. God loves us so much that He gave us His Son, Jesus. **[Bottom Line]** God gave us Jesus."

Craft Time

What You Need

- ☐ "Best Gift Book" Activity Page
- ☐ Cardstock
- ☐ Self-inking heart stamps
- ☐ Baby wipes
- ☐ Permanent marker

① What You Do

1. Gather small groups of children around you at a table for toddler craft time.
2. Depending on the size of your group, you may lead the craft two or three times. Not every child may want to participate in craft time. That's okay. Feel free to send home the craft materials for them to complete with their mom or dad.

Before the Activity

1. Copy "Best Gift Book" on cardstock, one per child.
2. Fold each child's book and write their name on their book.

During the Activity

1. Encourage children to stamp a heart on each page of their book.
2. Read each page of their book as they stamp it.
3. Clean hands as needed.

② What You Say

During the Activity

"God loves us so much that **[Bottom Line]** God gave us Jesus. Let's add some love stamps to your book about baby Jesus. Stamp a heart on the front of your book. **(Pause.)** This page says, 'The Best Gift.' Open your book and stamp a heart on the page with Mary and Joseph traveling to Bethlehem. **(Pause.)** This page says, 'Mary and Joseph traveled a long way to Bethlehem.' The next page has a picture of animals. There's a cow, a sheep, and a horse. Stamp a heart on this page. **(Pause.)** This page says 'Mary and Joseph stayed in a place with a manger that fed animals.' Turn your book to the back page and add lots of heart stamps. **(Pause.)** This page has a picture of baby Jesus in the manger and says 'Baby Jesus is born! Mary wrapped Jesus and laid Him in a manger.' **(Clean hands as needed.)** God loves us so much that He gave us His Son, Jesus. **[Bottom Line]** God gave us Jesus."