LESSON SNAPSHOT

BOTTOM LINE:
Jesus came to be our Savior.

OBJECTIVE:
Kids will learn that Jesus came to be their Savior.

KEY PASSAGE:
Luke 1:26-38, The Angel Visits Mary

MEMORY VERSE:
"She is going to have a son. You must give him the name Jesus. That's because he will save his people from their sins." Matthew 1:21 (NIRV)

SUMMARY:
Angelfish are beautiful and graceful aquarium fish, hard to miss even in a crowded tank. These beautiful fish remind us of the heavenly messenger who delivered good news to Mary: Jesus was coming to be our Savior!

SIMPLE PRAYER:
Dear God,

Thank you for the message of the angel.

In Jesus' name,
Amen

MEMORY VERSE

"She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." Matthew 1:21 (NIV)

"She is going to have a son. You must give him the name Jesus. That's because he will save his people from their sins." Matthew 1:21 (NIRV)

LARGE GROUP:
Put the verse on the big screen and read it aloud with the kids.

SMALL GROUP:
Give all the kids a Bible. Then after you read the verse, give them the reference and see who can find it first in their Bible.

FINDING CHRISTMAS

SKIT

THE ANGELFISH

ITEMS NEEDED:
Fish costumes for Mary (tetra) and the angelfish

CHARACTER BREAKDOWN:
3 M or F

CHARACTERS:
The narrator
Mary - A tetra fish
The Angelfish

The Narrator enters.

NARR: Once upon a time, in an ocean on the other side of the world, there was a little tetra fish named Mary. *(pause)* I said, there was a little tetra fish named Mary. *(looks off stage)* Psst, Mary! That's your cue!

MARY: I don't wanna!

NARR: Come on, Mary, the kids are waiting!

MARY: Do I have to?

NARR: Get out here now!

MARY: Okay.

Mary enters, a sad look on her face. She does not like the costume.

NARR: Mary was just a plain, ordinary tetra fish, engaged to another fish named Joseph.

MARY: Will you please tell me why I'm a fish and not a person? What happened to the Biblical costumes we were getting?

SKIT

NARR: They shipped us the fish instead. Come on, just go with it.

MARY: I look ridiculous!

NARR: One day, Mary was swimming along the reef… Go on, Mary, swim for us.

Mary rolls her eyes and then pretends to swim.

NARR: When all of a sudden, an angelfish appeared! (pause) I said an angelfish appeared!

ANGEL: No, I didn't!

MARY: Come on angelfish! Let's just get this over with!

The angelfish enters, looking sad. Mary cracks up laughing at the angelfish.

ANGEL: What's so funny?

MARY: Your costume's even more ridiculous than mine!

NARR: The angelfish said…

ANGEL: Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news. You will have a baby.

NARR: A baby? Really? Come on, angelfish!

ANGEL: Fine! You will have a guppy, and you shall name that guppy Jesus for he will save his people.

NARR: Ahem!

ANGEL: He will save his fish! I feel so silly.

NARR: The little tetra fish said…

MARY: Let it be to me as you have said, angelfish. I am the Lord's… tetra.

NARR: Mary rejoiced at the news. She was so excited. She had been chosen by God, and the guppy she bore would become the Savior of the whole world.

MARY: Okay, let's get out of here.

SKIT

ANGEL: Yep!

NARR: Hey, come on, you guys? Are you not even gonna take a bow? It's going to be a really long series if you don't get into the spirit! See you next week, kids.

OBJECT LESSON OR KIDS SERMON

ITEMS NEEDED:
An aquarium (or picture of one) with a hood, and fish.
Fish food (if using an actual tank)

Aquarium fish lead a pretty simple life. They eat, sleep, swim, and yes, they go to the bathroom all in this tiny space. They depend on us to take care of them by cleaning their tank and providing for their needs. One of the most important needs, of course, is food.

Fish aren't like dogs and cats. They can't be trained, and they don't like to be touched. Yet even fish can "learn" a few things. For example…

If using an actual aquarium, open the hood of the tank.

Fish that live in a tank like this know that when the hood is opened, it's feeding time. The hood stays shut most of the day. It's there for their protection, to keep them from jumping out. But in those rare moments when the hood is open, it's a signal to the fish that life-giving food is on the way.

Let one of the kids feed the fish.

The angel of the Lord was God's signal to the world that a life-giving Savior was on the way. The angel appeared to Mary and Joseph to tell them that Jesus would be the long-awaited Messiah. As we begin this Christmas season, let's remember the message of the angel. Through all the fun and craziness of the holiday, let's keep the message that a Savior is coming at the center of our Christmas celebration.

LARGE GROUP GAME

BUBBLE GUPPIES

ITEMS NEEDED:
A bottle of bubbles
A hula-hoop set up on its end

INSTRUCTIONS:
Choose one kid for this game. Have the player stand 2-3 feet from the hoop. The player will have 60 seconds to blow at least 20 bubbles from the bubble wand through the hula-hoop. If they can get 20 bubbles through the hoop before time runs out, they win a prize.

VARIATION:
Reduce the number of bubbles needed to win for younger players.

WHAT'S THE POINT?
The angelfish reminds us of the message of the angel, that Jesus has come to be our Savior.

FINDING CHRISTMAS

LARGE GROUP LESSON

BOTTOM LINE:
Jesus came to be our Savior.

OBJECTIVE:
Kids will learn that Jesus came to be their Savior.

KEY PASSAGE:
Luke 1:26-38, The Angel Visits Mary

INTRO:
Christmas time is coming, and the whole world is transforming into a winter wonderland. Christmas trees are popping up everywhere, indoors and out. There are lights in our homes, lights outside our homes, and lights in the street. Everywhere you turn, there's garland and tinsel and ornaments to be found. And the radio airwaves are filling with the sounds of Jingle Bells, Chestnuts Roasting on an Open Fire, and I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas.

The whole world is becoming a winter wonderland. So why in the world is our room here at church turning into… an aquarium?

I'm sure all of you have seen the movies Finding Nemo and Finding Dory. These amazing movies are filled with incredible sea creatures and unforgettable characters. Each movie is about someone searching for someone special. And both movies have absolutely nothing, zero, zilch, nada, to do with Christmas.

But the Pixar movies do have something in common with the Christmas season. Christmas is about seeking. It's about finding. It's about the world looking for the long awaited Messiah to come and save us from our sins. Thousands of years before the start of what we call the New Testament, God promised that he would send a Savior to free his people. Christmas is the celebration of when God finally sent that special someone.

This Christmas, we don't want to get distracted by Santa and sleigh bells and Christmas presents. We wanted to help you and your family to push through all the Christmas decorations and find what's most important. We're going to start our journey today with the graceful, beautiful angelfish.

LARGE GROUP LESSON

Even if you've never had an aquarium at home, I'm guessing all of you could spot an angelfish. These tropical fish have long, colorful fins. They are beautiful, graceful swimmers who stand out in just about any tank. Their majestic appearance reminded someone of the angels, hence the name, angelfish. And our journey to find the true meaning of Christmas begins, coincidentally, with an angel.

READ LUKE 1:26-38

MAIN POINT:
Angels are messengers of God. It's clear from Luke's writing that they are hard to miss, just like their namesake the angelfish, because the first thing the angel tells Mary is "Do not be afraid!" This angel has not come with bad news, but the greatest news ever spoken.

The angel told Mary that she would have a baby. His name would be Jesus, and he would deliver his people. As an Israelite, Mary knew that God had promised to send a Savior to save her people hundreds of years earlier. Mary received the news with joy and told the angel, "I am the Lord's servant."

The angel's news challenges us to look for Jesus this Christmas. A Savior is coming, he says, and he will save the whole world!

DRIVE IT HOME:
Mary had no way of knowing what kind of man her son Jesus would be. Mary also had no idea exactly what Jesus was coming to save her from. Many Israelites believed the Messiah would be a king, like King David. He would conquer the hated Romans, kick them out of Israel, and establish a new kingdom on Earth. But that's not the Savior or what the world needed!

Jesus came to save us from our sins. Jesus was God's plan for saving us from death so that we could live forever in Heaven. Unless God sent his Son to die for us, we would never be able to be reunited with our Creator. Jesus is a conquering king, but his enemy was our sin. That's what makes the news of his birth so amazing.

This Christmas, I want to challenge you all to remember the words of the angel. Remember that Jesus Christ has come to save us from sin. I hope you all enjoy the Christmas lights and Christmas trees and even the presents you give and receive, but I pray that you and your families with put Christ first this season.

The angel's message is all we need to have a Merry Christmas. Jesus is the greatest gift ever given. Let's find Jesus in Christmas this year, and let's celebrate the gift God gave the world through his only Son!

LARGE GROUP LESSON

CLOSE WITH A SIMPLE PRAYER:
Dear God,

Thank you for the message of the angel.

In Jesus' name,
Amen

FINDING CHRISTMAS

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (K-2ND)

ICEBREAKER:
Do any of you have aquariums at home?

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY:
Matthew 1:21
Give all the kids a Bible. Then after you read the verse, give them the reference and see who can find it first in their Bible.

SMALL GROUP GAME/ACTIVITY:
Pass out some small bottles of bubbles. See if as a group you can churn up enough bubbles in your circle to make it feel like you're in an aquarium yourself!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
Luke 1:26-38

Who was Mary?

What did the angel tell Mary?

What was Mary's reply to the angel?

Why did God send Jesus?

What did Jesus save us from?

SIMPLE PRAYER:
Dear God,

Thank you for sending Jesus to be our Savior.

In Jesus' name,
Amen

FINDING CHRISTMAS

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (3-5TH)

ICEBREAKER:
Do any of you have aquariums at home?

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY:
Matthew 1:21
Give all the kids a Bible. Then after you read the verse, give them the reference and see who can find it first in their Bible.

SMALL GROUP GAME/ACTIVITY:
Pass out some small bottles of bubbles. See if as a group you can churn up enough bubbles in your circle to make it feel like you're in an aquarium yourself!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
Luke 1:26-38

Why did God send the angel to see Mary?

What was Mary's reply to the angel?

Why did God send Jesus?

What are some things that distract us from the story of Jesus at Christmas time?

What is one thing you can do to help your family find Jesus this Christmas?

SIMPLE PRAYER:
Dear God,

Thank you for sending Jesus to be our Savior.

In Jesus' name,
Amen

POWERPOINT REVIEW GAME

FILL IN THE BLANKS

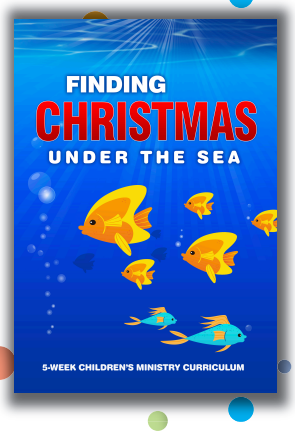
God sent _____ to speak to Mary.
AN ANGEL

The angel told Mary that she would have a _____.
BABY

The angel said the baby's name was _____.
JESUS

Mary said, "I am the Lord's _____."
SERVANT

God sent _____ to be the Savior of the world.
JESUS



MAKE IT STICK

5 Simple Ways You Can Make This Lesson Stick With your Kids

Finding Christmas Lesson 1

THIS WEEK'S LESSON: ANGELFISH



IN THE CAR:

Ask your child what they learned about this week on the drive home:
Angelfish are beautiful and graceful aquarium fish, hard to miss even in a crowded tank. These beautiful fish remind us of the heavenly messenger who delivered good news to Mary: Jesus was coming to be our Savior! Luke 1:26-38



HANGING OUT:

Make this week's lesson real:
Look for all the signs of Christ's coming you can this week with your kids. How many angels can you spot this week?



AT DINNER:

Here are some great discussion starters:
- Why did the angel visit Mary?
- What was the angel's message?
- How can we look for Jesus this Christmas?



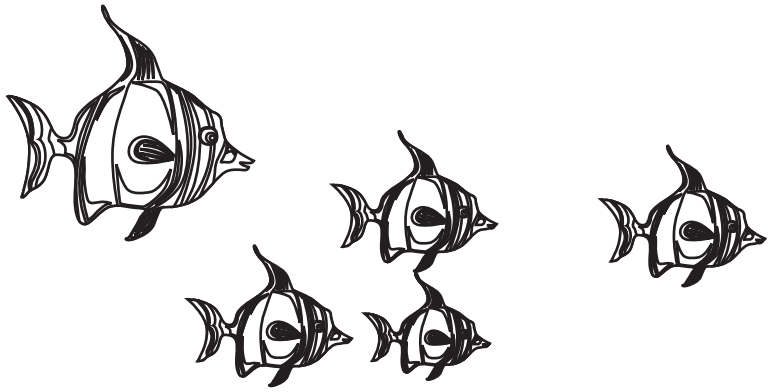
AT BEDTIME:

Quiz your child on this week's memory verse:
"She is going to have a son. You must give him the name Jesus. That's because he will save his people from their sins." Matthew 1:21 (NIRV)



PARENT TIME:

What you need to know:
As the Christmas season begins, make a commitment to seek Jesus first this year. Don't let the busyness and festivities distract you from pointing your family to Christ.



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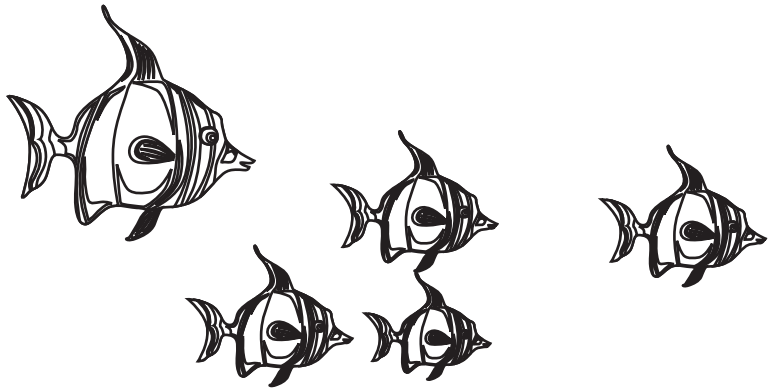

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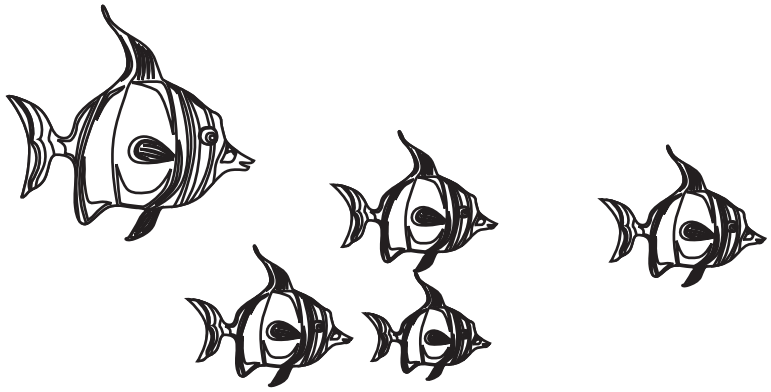

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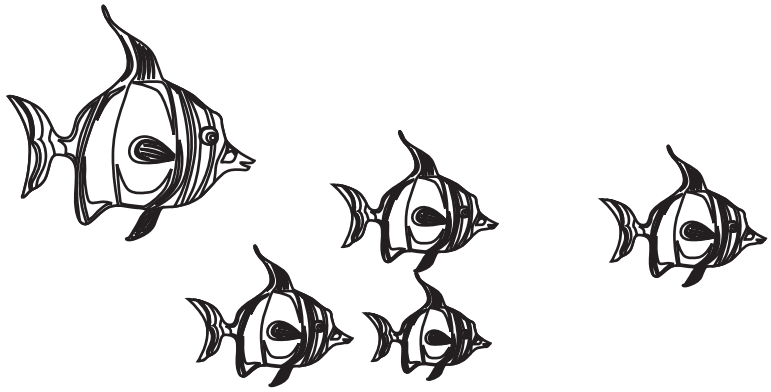

"She is going to have a son. You must give him the name Jesus. That's because he will save his people from their sins." - Matthew 1:21 NIRV

CUT ON DASHED LINE

CRAFT ACTIVITY

Have the kids create “angels” using finger paint on paper. Or cut angels out and decorate them with glitter, creating ornaments to hang on the tree. Or, make angelfish ornaments to hang on the tree, a unique reminder of the angel and his message. Or let them decorate the included coloring page.

