

Bible Point ▶

Jesus gives us new life.

Bible Verse

Believing in Jesus makes me a new person (adapted from 2 Corinthians 5:17).

Growing Closer to Jesus

- Children will
- learn how exciting it is to praise Jesus,
 - discover that Jesus deserves praise because he gives us new life,
 - teach Whiskers about Jesus' parade into Jerusalem, and
 - re-enact Jesus' triumphal entry.

Teacher Enrichment

Bible Basis

■ Jesus enters Jerusalem as a king.



**Mark
11:1-11**

This moment in Jewish history had long been anticipated. Zechariah 9:9 predicted that the Messiah would come “humble, riding on a donkey—riding on a donkey’s colt.” Without question, the Jews along Jesus’ path made this connection and knew what it meant. Their celebration made this clear as they covered Jesus’ path with their outer robes and with branches—a demonstration of honor and submission.

The cries of the people were also significant. They shouted, “Praise God!” As they referred to Jesus as “the one who comes in the name of the Lord” and spoke plainly of “the coming Kingdom of our ancestor David,” they were making clear references to the Messiah predicted many times in the Old Testament.

When we choose to live for Jesus, everything changes. We honor him in every facet of our lives. We honor him not only through our worship but also through our obedience, service, witness, and gratitude.

Prayer

- Read Psalm 95:6-7a; Mark 11:9-10.
- The people who welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem honored him with extravagant displays of worship. How do you worship extravagantly? How can you ignite a passion for worship within your students?
- Pray: Dear Lord, thank you for giving me these examples of worship. Please ignite an unquenchable passion for worship within my life and the lives of my students as I...

Before the Lesson

- Collect the necessary items for the activities you plan to use, referring to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies listed on the chart.
- Make photocopies of the “Today I Learned...” handout (at the end of this lesson) to send home with your children.
- Pray for the children in your class and for God’s direction in teaching the lesson.

This Lesson at a Glance

| | What Children Will Do | Classroom Supplies | Learning Lab Supplies |
|---|--|---|---|
| Welcome Time | Welcome! —Receive name tags and be greeted by the teacher. | Butterfly name tags from Lesson 1, washable markers, scissors, safety pins or tape | |
| Let's Get Started Direct children to one or more of the optional activities until everyone arrives. | Option 1: Donkey Pull Toys —Lead shoe-box donkeys around the room and care for them. | "Donkey Pattern" handout (p. 74), shoe boxes, washable markers, hole punch, glue sticks, yarn, scissors | |
| | Option 2: Donkey Puppets —Make donkey puppets, and hear how Jesus rode on a donkey. | "Donkey Puppet" handout (p. 75), lunch sacks, washable markers or crayons, glue sticks | |
| | Option 3: Branches of Praise —Make branches, and hear how people welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem. | Green crepe paper streamers, drinking straws, tape | |
| | Pick-Up Time —Sing a song as they pick up toys and gather for Bible Time Story. | CD player |  |
| Bible Story Time | Setting the Stage —Learn a finger play about a donkey and branches in the Bible story. | Branches from Option 3, green crepe paper streamers, tape |  |
| | Bible Song and Prayer Time —Sing a song, bring out the Bible, and pray together. | Bible, CD player |  |
| | Hear and Tell the Bible Story —Listen to the donkey tell about carrying Jesus into Jerusalem. | Bible, CD player |  |
| | Do the Bible Story —Act out what happened when Jesus entered Jerusalem. | Bible, green construction paper, scissors, hand towels |  |
| Closing  | The Easter Parade —Tell Whiskers what really happened when Jesus entered Jerusalem. | |  |
| | Jesus Enters Jerusalem —Learn a finger play about the story, and thank God for sending Jesus. | Branches from Option 3 or green crepe paper streamers and tape | |

*See the end of this lesson for extra-time ideas and supplies.

Welcome Time

SUPPLIES: butterfly name tags from Lesson 1, washable markers, scissors, safety pins or tape

- Bend down and make eye contact with children as they arrive.
- Greet each child individually with an enthusiastic smile.
- Thank each child for coming to class today.
- As children arrive, ask them about last week's "Today I Learned..." discussion, such as "How did your actions show God's love this week?" or "How did you serve people in your home?"
- Say: **Today we're going to learn that ► *Jesus gives us new life.***
- Hand out the butterfly name tags children made during Lesson 1, and help children attach the name tags to their clothing. If some of the name tags were damaged or if children weren't in class that week, have them make new name tags using the photocopiable handout.
- Direct children to the Let's Get Started activities you've set up.



BIBLE POINT



It's important to say the Bible Point just as it's written in each activity. Repeating the Bible Point over and over throughout the lesson will help children remember it and apply it to their lives.

Let's Get Started

Set up one or more of the following activities for children to do as they arrive. After you greet each child, invite him or her to choose an activity.

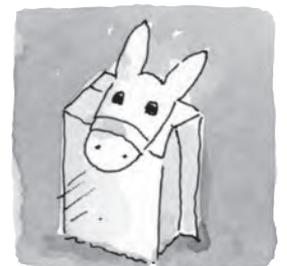
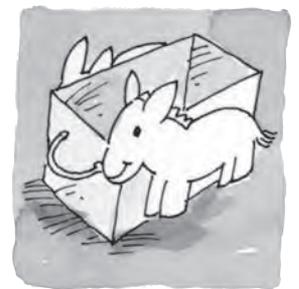
Circulate among the activities to offer help as needed and direct children's conversation toward the point of today's lesson. Ask questions such as "How do you think a king might travel?" or "How do you welcome special visitors to your home?"

■ Option 1: Donkey Pull Toys

SUPPLIES: "Donkey Pattern" handout (p. 74), washable markers or crayons, shoe boxes, hole punch, glue sticks, yarn, scissors

Before class, photocopy the "Donkey Pattern" handout, and cut out several donkeys. Set out the donkeys, small shoe boxes or tissue boxes, and glue sticks. Punch two holes in the front of each box. Let each child color two donkeys and then glue them to each side of a box. Give children 2-foot lengths of yarn to thread through the holes in the front of the boxes. Help children tie the yarn to make handles.

Encourage children to lead their donkeys around the room and pretend to brush them and give them food and water. Explain that Jesus' disciples went looking for a donkey for Jesus to ride. Tell children that the disciples led the donkey with a rope just as they're leading their donkeys around the room.



■ Option 2: Donkey Puppets

SUPPLIES: "Donkey Puppet" handout (p. 75), lunch sacks, washable markers or crayons, glue sticks

Before class, photocopy the "Donkey Puppet" handout, and cut out a donkey face for each child.

Set out the donkeys, lunch sacks, washable markers, and glue sticks. Let children color the donkey faces and glue them to the sacks to create donkey puppets. Tell children that in today's Bible story, Jesus rode a donkey into Jerusalem.

teacher tips

You'll be able to use the branches in later activities. You'll want to make up a few of these before the class begins so every child has one for Bible Story Time and the closing activity.

■ Option 3: Branches of Praise

SUPPLIES: green crepe paper streamers, drinking straws, tape

Set out the straws and tape. Let children tear green crepe paper streamers into strips and tape the strips to one end of the straws. Encourage children to wave their "branches." Tell children that people in today's Bible story waved branches to show how much they liked Jesus.

When everyone has arrived and you're ready to move on to Bible Story Time, encourage the children to finish what they're doing and get ready to clean up.

■ Pick-Up Time

SUPPLIES: CD player



Lead children in singing "Come Along With Me" with the CD (track 2) to the tune of "Come and Go With Me." Encourage children to sing along as they help clean up the room.



**Come along with me and pick up all our things,
Pick up all our things,
Pick up all our things.
Come along with me and pick up all our things
So our room will be clean.**

(Repeat 2x.)

Bible Story Time

■ Setting the Stage

SUPPLIES: branches from Option 3, green crepe paper streamers, tape



Tell children you'll shake the *clapper* to get their attention. Explain that when you shake it, the children are to stop what they're doing and raise their hands. Practice this signal a few times. Encourage children to respond quickly so you'll have time for all the fun activities you've planned.

Ask: • **What did you make or do when you came to class today?** (Led a donkey around the room; made a donkey puppet; made branches.)

Say: **Some of you made branches out of green paper; some of you made special donkey puppets, and some of you took care of pretend donkeys by**

giving them food and water and leading them around the room. You were all learning important things about our Bible story. Today we're learning that ► ***Jesus gives us new life.*** Green branches are an important part of our story, so we'll need to make sure everyone has one.

Let children who made branches hold them. Hand out the extra branches to the children who didn't make them. (If you didn't make extra branches, you can tape a strip of green crepe paper streamer to the left hand of each child who didn't make a branch.) Let children practice waving their branches. Then show each child how to make "donkey ears" by holding up two fingers of his or her right hand.

Say: **Now let's do a finger play together to find out what our Bible story is about. Watch and listen carefully so you'll know when to wave your branches and make your donkey ears.**

Lead the children in the following finger play. Read each line and demonstrate the motions. Then have the children say the words and do the motions with you.

Listen to the happy crowd (*cup hand around ear*)
Shout "Praise God!" clear and loud. (*Cup hands around mouth.*)
See the branches swing and sway (*wave branches*)
As our Lord Jesus comes this way.
On a donkey furry and brown (*hold up two fingers for "donkey ears" and move hand forward*),
Jesus rides right into town.
Shout "Praise God!" all together. (*Cup hands around mouth.*)
Jesus is our king forever! (*Wave branches.*)

Collect the streamers and branches to use during the closing.

Ask: • **Why did the people love Jesus?** (Because he did good things; because he made sick people better.)

- **How do you show people that you love them?** (With hugs; I say, "I love you.")
- **Did you ever go to a parade? What was that like?** (Crowded; fun; noisy.)
- **What do you do when you see somebody important or famous in a parade?** (Clap; say, "Yea!")

Say: **When Jesus came into Jerusalem, it was almost like a parade. People waved branches and shouted "Praise God!" to praise Jesus and show how much they loved him. We have many reasons to praise Jesus, too. Today we praise Jesus because ► *Jesus gives us new life.***



■ Bible Song and Prayer Time

SUPPLIES: Bible, CD player



tracks 3, 4

Say: **Now it's time to choose a Bible person to bring me the Bible marked with today's Bible story. As we sing our Bible song, we'll pass around our special Bible. The person who's holding the Bible when the music stops will be our Bible person today.**

Lead children in singing "I'm So Glad for the Bible" with the CD (track 3) to the tune of "Give Me Oil in My Lamp." As you sing, pass around the special Bible.



SING

I'm so glad for the Bible.
 Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.
 I'm so glad for God's book today.
 I'm so glad for the Bible.
 Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'—
 Keep me learnin' all about his way.

Let me hear 'bout God's love—
 Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.
 Let me hear 'bout God's love for me.
 Let me hear 'bout God's love—
 Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.
 Let's shine the light for all to see.

(Repeat first verse.)

When the music stops, invite the child who's holding the Bible to bring it to you. Stamp the child's hand with the *cross and crown stamp*, and thank the child for bringing you the Bible. Then stamp the other children's hands. As they come up to you to get their hands stamped, take time to show them the Bible and explain to them that the Bible is God's Word for them.

Say: **I'm thankful for** [name of child who brought the Bible], **and I'm thankful for everyone in our class today. Let's thank God together for all our friends in this class.**

Lead children in singing "I'm So Glad We're Together" with the *CD* (track 4) to the tune of "Give Me Oil in My Lamp."



SING

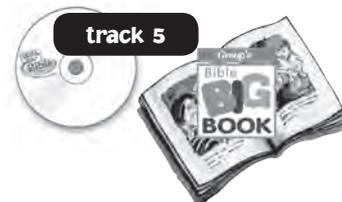
I'm so glad we're together.
 Keep us prayin', prayin', prayin'.
 I'm so glad we're all here today.
 I'm so glad we're together.
 Keep us prayin', prayin', prayin'—
 Prayin' for each other every day.

Lead children in folding their hands and bowing their heads as you continue to sing.

Thank you, Lord, for each one.
 Keep me thankful, thankful, thankful.
 Thank you for everyone who's here.
 Thank you, Lord, for each one.
 Keep me thankful, thankful, thankful—
 Thankful for our friends both far and near.

■ Hear and Tell the Bible Story

SUPPLIES: Bible, CD player



track 5

Cue the *CD* to "The Donkey's Story" (track 5). Bring out the *Bible Big Book: The Miracle of Easter*. Have children gather around you. Open your Bible to **Mark 11:1-11**, and show the passage to the children.

teacher tips

At this stage in their physical development, 3- and 4-year-olds can draw recognizable shapes and work simple puzzles.

Say: **Our Bible story comes from the book of Mark in the Bible. Our *Bible Big Book* shows us pictures of our Bible story. Look at the picture while we listen to the Bible story. During the story, whenever you hear the donkey say “heehaw,” make donkey ears with two fingers like this.** Hold up two fingers and have the children do the same. **Super! Now we’re ready for the story.**

Open the *Bible Big Book* to page 1, and set it on a chair so all the children can see it. Play “The Donkey’s Story” from the CD. As you listen, follow along in the script below so you can prompt children to make their donkey ear motions. When you hear “As Jesus and I started down the road,” turn the page in the *Bible Big Book*.

Heehaw! Hello, boys and girls! I’m a donkey, and my name is Bray. I’m the most special donkey in the whole world. Do you know why? Because I got to carry Jesus on my back! Heehaw! Let me tell you all about it.

One day I was standing outside my master’s house. We lived on a quiet street in a little village, so I wasn’t used to seeing many strangers. But all of a sudden, two men untied me and started to lead me away.

“Why are you untying that donkey?” asked the man who lived next door.

“The Lord needs it,” the strangers answered. “We’ll bring it back soon.”

“OK,” said the neighbor.

So the two men led me away. I wondered where they were taking me. I gave a tiny, little “heehaw” to let them know I was scared. They patted me and talked to me quietly, and then I felt better.

Soon we met a man they called Jesus. Jesus had the kindest face I’d ever seen. Heehaw! He patted me gently, and I rubbed my nose against him. That’s how a donkey says, “I like you.”

Jesus’ friends spread their coats on my back. The coats felt soft and warm. Then Jesus sat on my back. That was a surprise. No one had ever sat on me before. I shifted my feet and said, “Heehaw!” Then Jesus stroked my neck and spoke to me in a soft voice. I twisted my head around to look at Jesus. He looked so kind and wonderful that I decided to give him the best, most gentle ride that I could.

As Jesus and I started down the road, other people came with us. As we got closer to Jerusalem, more and more people came along. Soon there was a big crowd of happy people on both sides of the road. They loved Jesus, I could tell. They waved branches as we passed by and shouted, “Hosanna!” Sometimes I joined in with a great big “Heehaw!”

Some of them even laid their coats in the road to make a nice path for us. I stepped very carefully. I was proud to carry Jesus. I could tell Jesus was someone special, and I was glad to be part of Jesus’ special day.

When the story is over, turn off the CD player, and say: **Point to the animal who says “heehaw.”**

Ask: • **What did the donkey do in this story?** (Carried Jesus; walked down the street.)

Say: **Point to what the people waved when they shouted “Hosanna!”**

Ask: • **Who did the people shout to?** (Jesus; the king.)

Say: **Hosanna means “Praise God!”**

Ask: • **Why did the people shout “Praise God!”?** (To show they loved Jesus; because it was fun; because they were happy.)

• **Look at the people. How do you think they felt when they saw Jesus?**
(Glad; excited; happy.)

This Bible story is featured in the new *My First Hands-On Bible™*. Order several now for your ministry at group.com.



At this age, preschoolers often have lots of energy and can walk and run with confidence. They can also draw recognizable shapes and work simple puzzles.

Say: **The people of Jerusalem were excited to see Jesus. Jesus had done so many wonderful things. They all wanted to see Jesus and hear what he had to say. The people praised Jesus when they said “Praise God!”**

We can praise Jesus, too. Can you say this verse with me? Show children **2 Corinthians 5:17** in the Bible. Then have children point to themselves as they say the adapted verse: ► **Believing in Jesus makes me a new person. Praise God!**

BIBLE VERSE ►

Let’s re-create the story here in our classroom.

■ Do the Bible Story

SUPPLIES: Bible, green construction paper, scissors, hand towel for each child



Before class, cut several leaves from green construction paper. You will need a small hand towel for each child.

Give one child a *bongo stick* from the Learning Lab. Distribute the *mini groan tube* and the *tambourine* from the Learning Lab as well as the leaves and towels.

Say: **As I read today’s Bible story from Mark 11:1-11, we’re going to act out what happened. One of you is going to pretend to be Jesus riding on the donkey.** Encourage the child with the *bongo stick* to pretend to “ride” the *bongo stick* as if it were a donkey. **The rest of you are going to lay your towels and leaves on the floor in front of “Jesus.”** If you have the *mini groan tube* and *tambourine*, you can play those instruments while the others are putting their towels on the floor. **Ready? Go!**

Read the passage from a child-friendly Bible such as the *Hands-On Bible*. Encourage kids to act out the story together. After a little while, let kids switch roles. Be sure everyone has a chance to play each role.

Ask: • **How would you have felt if you’d been in Jerusalem that day?** (I would’ve been excited; I would’ve been happy.)

• **How did the people praise Jesus and show that they loved him?** (They sang songs, waved branches.)

• **How can you praise Jesus at home?** (I can sing; I can pray; I can jump up and down.)



Say: **The people in today’s Bible story were so excited and happy to see Jesus that they wanted to praise him. Jesus deserves our praise because he was willing to die on the cross for us.**

We can praise Jesus, too, by singing to him, praying to him, and telling others about him. There are lots of ways that we can praise Jesus! We praise Jesus because ► **Jesus gives us new life.**



BIBLE POINT ►

Let’s see if our friend Whiskers would like to hear our special story about Jesus and the donkey.

Closing

■ The Easter Parade

SUPPLIES: none

Bring out Whiskers the Mouse, and go through the following puppet script. When you finish the script, put Whiskers away and out of sight.



Whiskers: Hi, everybody! I've been so excited all day long. I couldn't wait until you all came because I wanted to tell you all about the fun my cousin Joey and I had yesterday.

Teacher: It must be something really special, Whiskers. Tell us all about it.

Whiskers: My cousin Joey came over to my house, and we decided to have an Easter parade. We wanted to praise Jesus just like the people in the Bible did.

Teacher: That's a great idea. I'm sure you had a great time. Did you wave branches?

Whiskers: No, our parade was even better than that. We pretended that all the people set off firecrackers to praise Jesus. We made lots of noise—Kaboom! Pow! Boom-boom! And Jesus rode in a race car. It went vroom-vroom-vroom! And then the race car sped down the street, and Jesus stomped on the brakes. The car went screeeech and left tire marks all over the road. And then...

Teacher: Wait a minute, Whiskers! That doesn't sound at all like our Bible story. Boys and girls, why don't you tell Whiskers what really happened.

(Lead children in telling Whiskers how the people of Jerusalem greeted Jesus as he rode into town on a donkey.)

Whiskers: *(A little doubtful)* But my story is much more exciting. I thought it was more fun this way.

Teacher: Your story is exciting, Whiskers. But the Bible tells us that Jesus was gentle and came riding into Jerusalem on a donkey, not in a race car. The people loved Jesus for all the good things he did. They even wanted to make him their king! But Jesus came to die for our sins. We celebrate Easter because Jesus is God's Son and he rose again.

Whiskers: Maybe we did make up too much of the story.

Teacher: Well, there's one thing that you didn't make up, Whiskers.

Whiskers: What's that?

Teacher: Easter is exciting! We can have lots of fun praising Jesus because ► Jesus gives us new

life. That's the exciting message of Easter time!

Whiskers: Hooray! Let's praise Jesus together. Are you ready, boys and girls? Let's shout "Praise God!" together just like they did in the Bible story. Praise God! Praise God! Praise God!

Teacher: That's more like it. Jesus is alive today, and he loves to hear our praises.

Whiskers: I'd better go now. I have to tell my cousin Joey how it really happened so we can put on another Easter parade. See you all later!

Permission to photocopy this script from Group's Hands-On Bible Curriculum® Preschool, granted for local church use.
Copyright © Group Publishing, Inc., 1515 Cascade Ave., Loveland, CO 80538. group.com



■ Jesus Enters Jerusalem

SUPPLIES: branches from Option 3 or green crepe paper streamers and tape

Use the branches your students made during Option 3. If you didn't make extra ones for additional children, you can tape a strip of green crepe paper streamer to the left hand of each child who didn't make a branch.

Say: **Let's praise Jesus by doing our finger play again. I'll say a line, and then you repeat it and do the motions I do.**

Listen to the happy crowd (*cup hand around ear*)

Shout "Praise God!" clear and loud. (*Cup hands around mouth.*)

See the branches swing and sway (*wave branches*)

As our Lord Jesus comes this way.

On a donkey furry and brown (*hold up two fingers for "donkey ears" and move hand forward*),

Jesus rides right into town.

Shout "Praise God!" all together. (*Cup hands around mouth.*)

Jesus is our king forever! (*Wave branches.*)

Repeat the finger play, and have children do it with you. Then gather the children for a closing prayer. Pray: **God, thank you for sending your Son, Jesus, to the world. We want to praise Jesus because ► Jesus gives us new life. In Jesus' name, amen.**



Growing closer to Jesus extends beyond the classroom.

Photocopy the "Today I Learned..." handout (at the end of this lesson) for this week, and send it home with the children. Encourage parents to use the handout to plan meaningful family activities to reinforce this week's topic.



For Extra Time

If you have a long class time or want to add additional elements to your lesson, try one of the following activities.

■ **Lively Learning: Donkey Search**

Play this version of Hide and Seek in your room or outside in a safe area. The child who hides is the Donkey. Everyone else is a Disciple. As each Disciple finds the Donkey, he or she joins the Donkey in the hiding place. Play until all the children have found the Donkey. Then choose a new Donkey, and have the children play the game again. As you play, talk with children about the donkey that carried Jesus into Jerusalem.

■ **Make to Take: Road to Jerusalem**



Cut 4x12-inch strips from cardboard or cereal boxes. Have the children glue bite-sized shredded wheat cereal to the edges of the cardboard strips to make them look like roads. Cut scraps of fabric into simple coat shapes. Give each child one coat shape to glue to the center of the road. Have the children “walk” their fingers along the road and pretend their fingers are the donkey that carried Jesus into Jerusalem. Remind the children that we celebrate Easter because ► Jesus gives us new life.

■ **Treat to Eat: Bananas of Praise**

Cut bananas into quarters. Give each child a small cup that contains a spoonful of green Jell-O powder or presweetened green Kool-Aid powder. Have the children sprinkle their banana pieces with the green powder. As children enjoy their banana branches, remind them that the people of Jerusalem waved branches to welcome Jesus.

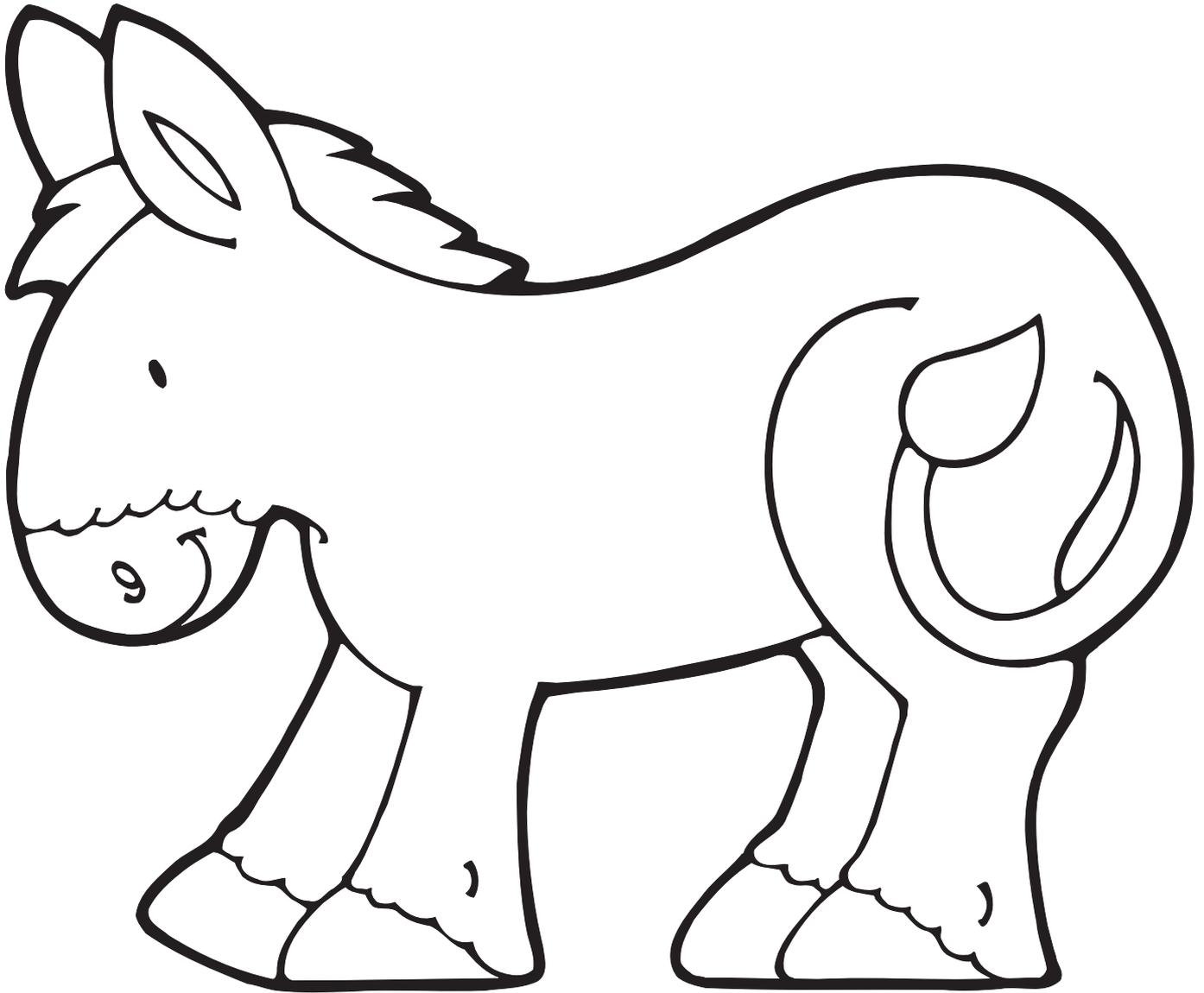


■ **Story Picture: The People Praise Jesus With Branches**

Give each child a copy of the “Today I Learned...” handout (at the end of this lesson). Set out glue sticks and Easter grass cut into short sections. Have children rub glue over the pictures of the branches and then press pieces of Easter grass onto the glue. As children work, have them tell you why the people waved branches when Jesus passed by. Remind children that ► Jesus gives us new life.

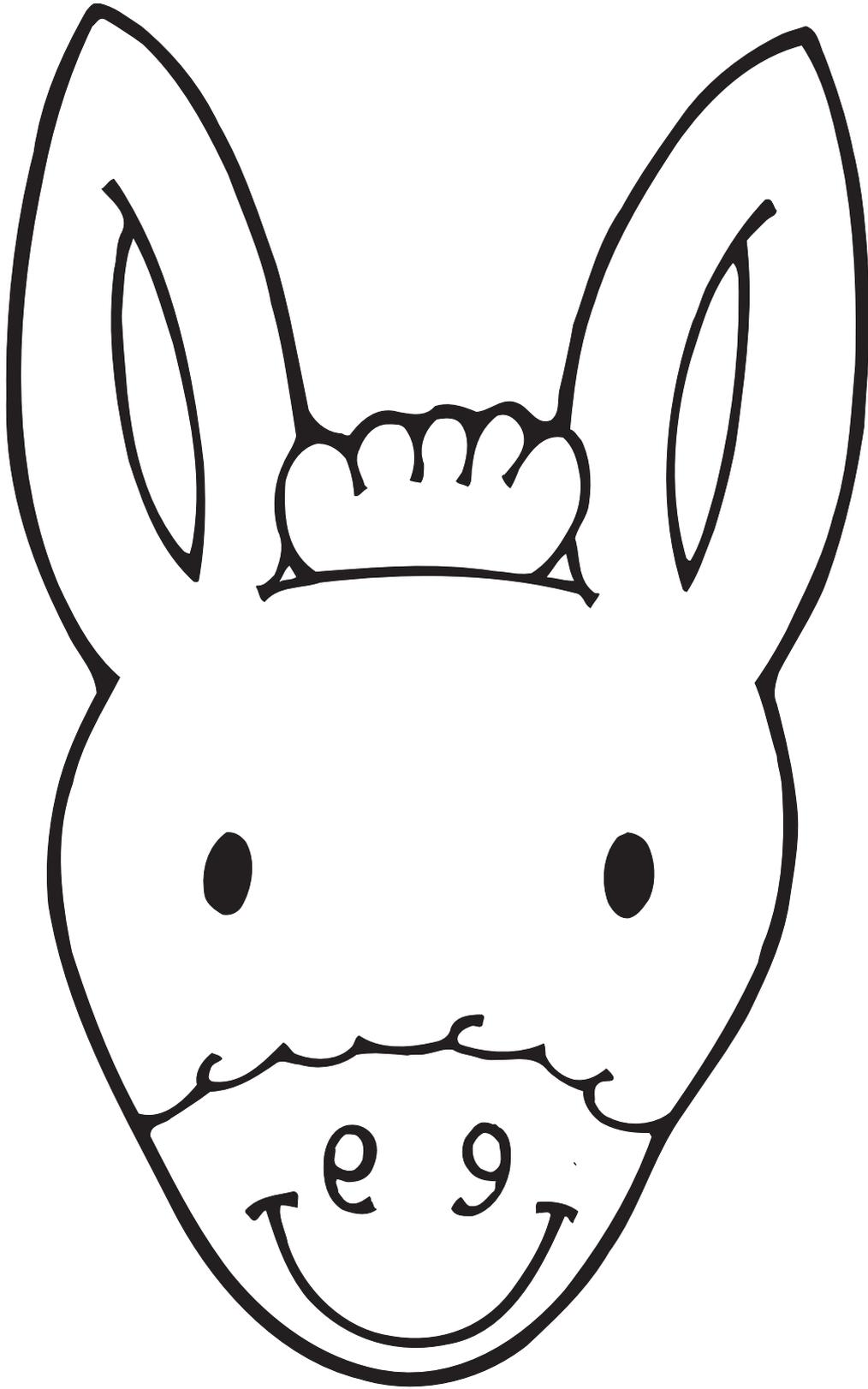
Donkey Pattern

Photocopy and cut out two donkey patterns for each child.



Donkey Puppet

Photocopy and cut out the donkey face for each child.



Today i learned..

Jesus gives us new life.

Help me learn this:

Believing in Jesus makes me a new person
(adapted from 2 Corinthians 5:17).

Ask me:

- Why was everyone happy when Jesus came to town?
- What did the people do as Jesus rode into town?
- How can our family praise Jesus together?

Family Fun

- Take your child on a walk and look for a tree that's budding or has tiny new leaves. Point out that the tree is growing leaves on its branches. Remind your child that the people who greeted Jesus waved tree branches to show they loved him. Show your child how to imitate a tree growing leaves as you fold your arms into your chest and then slowly spread your arms out wide and wave them in praise to Jesus. Talk about the new life that Jesus brings.
- Have your child get down on hands and knees and pretend to be the donkey Jesus rode. Lay down a path of soft blankets to cushion the "donkey's" journey. Talk about the fact that people who were happy to see Jesus laid their coats on the road to welcome him.

Lesson 5
Today your child learned that we praise Jesus because **JESUS GIVES US NEW LIFE**. Children heard how people praised Jesus with branches. They waved pretend branches and praised Jesus, too.

The People Praise Jesus With Branches (Mark 11:1-11)

