



Ponderosa Preschool



PRESCHOOL
LEADER MANUAL



PONDEROSA PRESCHOOL

LEADER MANUAL



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Group



Group resources really work!

This Group resource incorporates our R.E.A.L. approach to ministry. It reinforces a growing friendship with Jesus, encourages long-term learning, and results in life transformation, because it's:



Relational

Person-to-person interaction enhances spiritual growth and builds Christian friendships.

Experiential

What we experience through action and discussion sticks with us up to 9 times longer than what we simply hear or read.

Applicable

The aim of ministry is to equip people to be both hearers and doers of God's Word.

Lifelong

Experiences transform the heart, moving faith beyond the walls of church and into everyday life for years to come.

Ponderosa Preschool Leader Manual

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Visit our websites:

group.com ✨ group.com/vbs

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Saddle Up for a Wild Weekend!

At Yee-Haw VBS, preschoolers kick up their heels as they stampede through the wild frontier and celebrate God's good gifts! They'll round up a whole herd of friends and discover that Jesus is God's greatest gift. As the Ponderosa Preschool Leader, you'll welcome preschoolers, guide them through God's Word, lead them in exciting games, and let them craft and create adorable projects—all while reinforcing one easy-to-remember Bible truth. At Yee-Haw VBS, you'll corral kids into meaningful conversations, warm friendships, and a frontier of fun! Get ready for laughter, excitement, noise, and the joy of watching kids become friends with God's greatest gift of all—Jesus!

Before you get started, here's what you should know:

- * **Everyone's on the move!** Preschoolers start their day with the elementary kids at Moo-sic & More. Then they'll head to Ponderosa Preschool for most of their activities. At the end of VBS, you'll lead preschoolers to Closing Corral for large-group wrap-up time. (Check out the sample schedule on page 5 to get an idea of the flow of each day's activities and how you may want to have large groups of preschoolers travel through Ponderosa Preschool.)
- * **Everyone's in a Crew.** At Yee-Haw VBS, preschoolers hold a Roundup Rope as they travel in small, mixed-age groups called Crews. Preschool Crews have up to five children (ages 3 to 5) plus one teenage or adult leader. Mixed-age Crews are a fresh, incredible way to reach kids!
- * **Everyone's learning one key Bible truth.** Every activity at Yee-Haw VBS reinforces one simple Bible truth, called a Bible Point. It's important to use the Bible Point as it's written since it's integrated into the experiences and activities throughout the entire program. Yee-Haw VBS is intentionally designed so that every station connects to the Bible Point, so children come away with an easy-to-apply scriptural truth.

Kids will be listening for the Bible Point, **GOD GIVES GOOD GIFTS**. When kids hear the Bible Point, they'll shout "Yee-haw!" and raise a fist in celebration. Just think, each time kids hear the Point, they'll be reminded of God's goodness and love for them!

HAVE YOU HERD?

Every day you'll use an attention-getter to get everyone focused on you for more fun. A Buckaroo Bell (available from Group Publishing) or other attention-getter saves time and is *loads* better than lots of shushing or shouting.



Buckaroo Bell



"Yee-haw!"

HAVE YOU HERD?

Team teaching is the way to go! You may want to round up a few willing friends who can share this experience with you. With one person leading Bible Adventures, one leading Craft & Play, and one leading Games, each person's job is a snap!



Before You Saddle Up

- * **Prepare your heart.** Pray for the preschoolers who will come to Yee-Haw VBS, for the parents who will be reached, and for the other volunteers on your team. Ask God to guide and encourage your VBS Director through this exciting event.
- * **Prepare your supplies.** Work with the Yee-Haw VBS Director to collect necessary supplies and decorations. You may want to list the needs in your church bulletin and ask church members to donate items such as bandannas, stick horses, stuffed animals, bales of hay, rope, and even a saddle, if possible.
- * **Prepare your lessons.** This is the easy part! Each lesson has been tested so you *know* it works. You don't have to memorize the script, but be familiar enough that you aren't reading it. During the Bible story, use emotion, energy, and excitement as you immerse kids in these incredible and true Bible adventures.
- * **Prepare your wardrobe.** Ask your VBS Director what you should wear. Consider a fringed vest, western boots, and a cowboy hat. Staff T-shirts are available at group.com/vbs and will quickly identify you as a staff member.
- * **Prepare your room.** Determine where you'll meet, remembering that you'll have plenty of busy preschoolers exploring your room. Ideally, choose an area that has an attached bathroom and sink since you'll likely be doing crafts in this area and will need to wash a few messy hands. It's also a good idea to have easy access to your outside play area so children don't have far to walk when they play games.



Then create a fun horse stable for your little ponies to play in. First, cover the walls with Weathered Wood Plastic Backdrop. On one wall, use black paper to create paddock doors for several horses—and don't forget to include a spot for Ranger! On another wall, cut cardboard to create a wooden fence. Set out a few coiled ropes, a saddle, and several bales of hay to finish your scene. You can find thematic decorations at group.com/vbs.

Sample Schedule—6:00–8:30 p.m.

If you have more than 20 preschoolers, we recommend having a separate leader for each of the three areas in Ponderosa Preschool. After Bible Adventures, form two groups of Crews and have Crew Leaders guide their Crews in rotating through the stations, according to a schedule like the one below.

| Time | Group A Crews | Group B Crews |
|---|---|---------------|
| | <u>1-4</u> | <u>5-8</u> |
| 6:00-6:30 | Moo-sic & More (with the elementary kids) | |
| Allow 5 minutes to travel to Ponderosa Preschool. | | |
| 6:35-7:00 | Bible Adventures | |
| Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station. | | |
| 7:05-7:30 | Craft & Play | Games |
| Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station. | | |
| 7:35-8:00 | Games | Craft & Play |
| Allow 5 minutes to travel to Closing Corral. | | |
| 8:05-8:30 | Closing Corral (with the elementary kids) | |



Ponderosa

Preschool Schedule

Day 1



Bible Point: God gives good gifts.

Bible Verse: "For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16)

Bible Story: God sends Jesus to earth. (Luke 2:1-20)

| Time | Group A Crews | Group B Crews |
|------|---|---------------|
| | Moo-sic & More (with the elementary kids) | |
| | Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station. | |
| | Bible Adventures | |
| | Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station. | |
| | Craft & Play | Games |
| | Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station. | |
| | Games | Craft & Play |
| | Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station. | |
| | Closing Corral (with the elementary kids) | |



Ponderosa

Preschool Schedule

Day 2



Bible Point: God gives good gifts.

Bible Verse: "For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16)

Bible Story: Jesus dies and comes back to life. (John 16-21)

| Time | Group A Crews | Group B Crews |
|------|---|---------------|
| | Moo-sic & More (with the elementary kids) | |
| | Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station. | |
| | Bible Adventures | |
| | Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station. | |
| | Craft & Play | Games |
| | Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station. | |
| | Games | Craft & Play |
| | Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station. | |
| | Closing Corral (with the elementary kids) | |

Day 1

Bible Point: God gives good gifts.

Bible Story: God sends Jesus to earth. (Luke 2:1-20)

Bible Verse: “For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16)

Consider This...

- ✧ There are dozens of prophecies in the Old Testament surrounding the birth of the Messiah, and Jesus fulfills every one!
 - Jesus’ birth in Bethlehem fulfills Micah 5:2: “But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, are only a small village among all the people of Judah. Yet a ruler of Israel, whose origins are in the distant past, will come from you on my behalf.”
 - Jesus’ virgin birth was foretold in Isaiah 7:14: “The Lord himself will give you the sign. Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel.”
- ✧ After Jesus’ birth, Mary wrapped him in cloths and laid him in a manger. Mangers held food for animals, giving them sustenance and life. Jesus called himself the Bread of Life, and he is what gives us strength, nourishment, and everlasting life.
- ✧ The shepherds were the first people to hear the good news of Jesus’ birth. Shepherds were among the lowest of the low in their society and considered unclean. Because the angel told these men about Jesus’ birth first, God showed that his love and the gift of Jesus are for everyone.

Why It Matters...

Kids love receiving gifts—especially at Christmastime! Yet presents like bicycles and toys break. Kids outgrow new clothes, just as they grow from wanting skates to wanting smartphones. But God’s gift of Jesus is the *perfect* gift—one size fits all! As you share the Christmas story in today’s lesson, you’ll have the opportunity to help kids discover that Jesus is God’s most precious gift...for *all* of us, every day! Use today’s experiences to help kids understand *why* Jesus is a good gift, one that will be with them for eternity!





Moo-sic & More

Learn the Bible Point and Bible verse, meet cowboy Rawhide McSpur, and worship with upbeat songs.



Preschool Bible Adventures

Learn that Jesus, who was born in a stable, is God's gift of love to us.



Preschool Craft & Play

- Art Hearts
- Horsin' Around
- Giddyup & Grow Chart



Preschool Games

- Baby on Board
- Hug Hop
- Shake, Shake, Shake



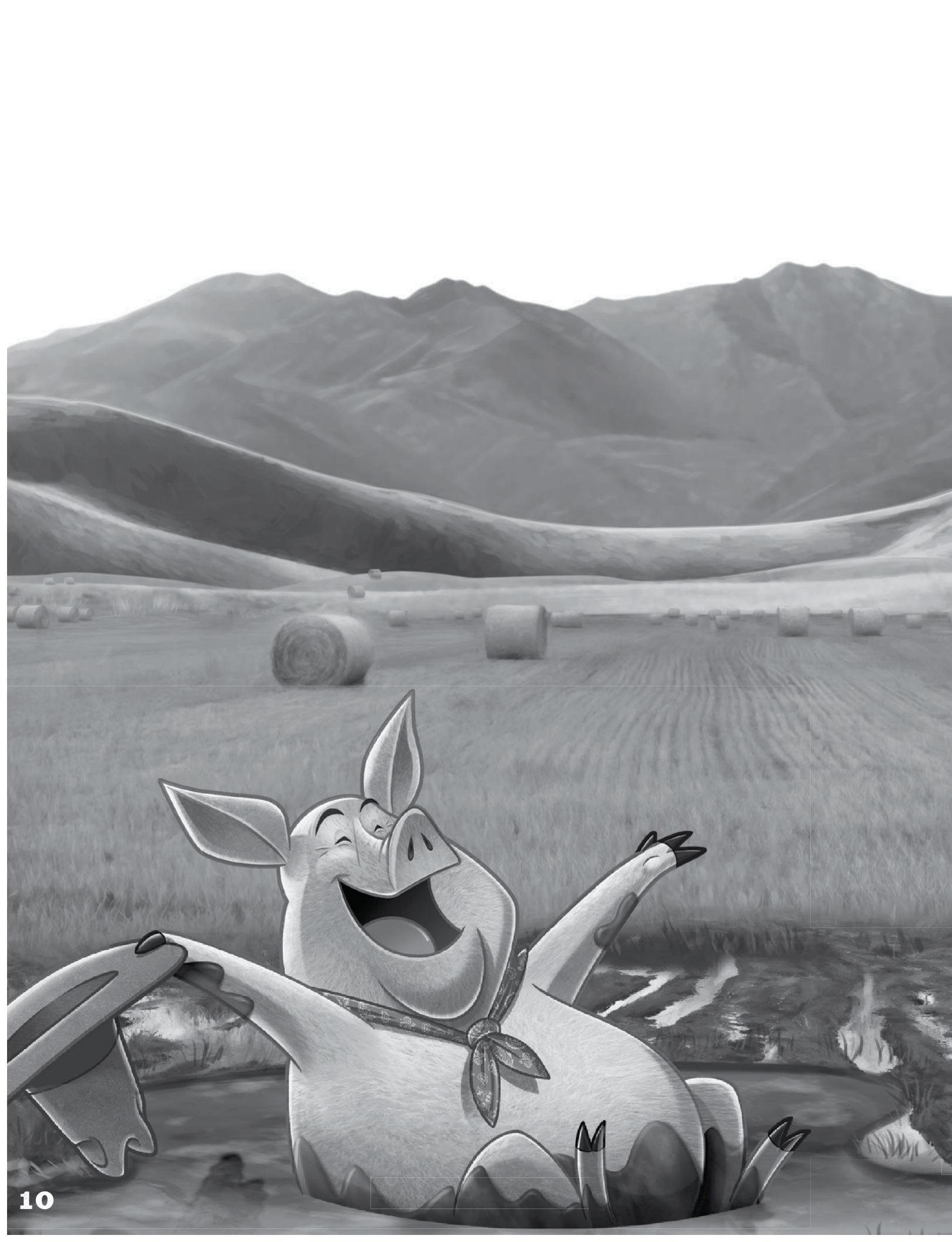
Closing Corral

Watch a kid-story video, then explore what a big difference we can make when we share God's good gift of love in our world.



Day 1 **Bible Story**

God sends Jesus to earth. (Luke 2:1-20)



Day 1

Bible Adventures

Get Ready

- * Mark your Bible at Luke 2:1-20.
- * Put the costumes and baby doll inside the gift box.

Welcome Crews

Gather children with their Crews, and introduce yourself.

Say: **Welcome to Yee-Haw VBS! I'm so glad you're here today! At Yee-Haw VBS, we're imagining that we're way out west, ready to saddle up and stampede through a fun frontier. We'll make a herd of new friends and discover that **GOD GIVES GOOD GIFTS.** (Yee-haw!)**

You know, sometimes in the wild frontier, cowboys use a rope called a lasso to catch animals that might be trying to run away. They swing the lasso like this. Make a circular motion in the air with one hand. **Show me how you'd lasso an animal!** Lead kids in pretending to swing lassos in the air.

That's some good lasso-swinging! Now let's add in shouting "yee-haw" as we lasso! Lead kids in shouting "yee-haw" as they pretend to swing lassos.

That was fun! You know, sometimes when cowboys are out riding their horses and lassoing animals, they hear a bell that means it's time for dinner. It might sound like this Buckaroo Bell. Hold up and sound your Buckaroo Bell. **Sometimes during VBS I'll need to get your attention so everyone can hear what to do next. When you hear the Buckaroo Bell, it means I need your attention, so freeze and listen carefully. Let's practice!**

Have preschoolers pretend to swing lassos and shout "yee-haw" again. After about 15 seconds, sound your Buckaroo Bell and have children freeze in place.

Thanks, buckaroos! I think you'd do fine on the frontier!

Introduce Crew Leaders

Say: **During Yee-Haw VBS, your herd of new friends will include loving grown-ups called Crew Leaders. Your Crew Leader will stay with you, keep you safe, and have lots of fun with you! If you need anything at all, just tell your Crew Leader. When I count to three, give your Crew Leader a big buckaroo pat on the back.** Count to three and encourage children to pat their Crew Leaders on the back.

Supplies

- preschool-friendly Bible
- Buckaroo Bell*
- large gift box and lid wrapped separately
- baby doll
- simple Bible-times costumes or bathrobes for "Mary" and "Joseph"
- 3 adult-size flannel shirts
- several large, white shirts
- several white sheets or towels
- flashlight
- Moo-sic & More DVD*
- DVD player and TV

*available from Group Publishing or your Group VBS supplier



You also have some special friends who will travel with you in your little group called a Crew. Take a minute to meet your Crew friends. Try to learn each person's name. Direct Crew Leaders to fist-bump each child in their Crews and say, "[Child's name], let's saddle up!"

Share About Presents

Open your Bible to Luke 2, and show preschoolers the passage.

Say: **Now let's hear a true story from God's special book, the Bible. Hold up the Bible. We know that everything in the Bible really happened, and every word is true.**

Today I want to share a true story about something God did to show his amazing, awesome love for us. We'll discover that GOD GIVES GOOD GIFTS. (Yee-haw!) In your Crew, tell about a time you received a gift that made you feel loved. Ask:

❓ **When do you get gifts?**

❓ **Who gives you gifts?**

❓ **Why do those people give you gifts?**

Say: **Sometimes people who love us give us gifts, and those gifts make us feel special. Today's Bible story is about the greatest gift that's ever been given! Bring out the gift box, and have children guess what might be inside. The things inside this box will help us all be a part of this wonderful true story.**

Mary and Joseph

Say: **The Bible tells us that God made the world and all the people in it. And for a while, people in the world liked each other and were nice to each other. You're sitting close to your friends, just as you do when you're with people you like. It feels good to be close to people we like, doesn't it?**

Well, as time went by, the people God made started doing wrong things. They told lies. They hurt each other. They were mean. Take three big scoots away from your friends. Pause. People did not love each other.

God was so sad to see his wonderful creation doing such hurtful things. God loves people. He wanted them to feel his love and see how much he still loved them. So God picked a special woman named Mary and her husband, Joseph, for an important job.

Choose two children to be Mary and Joseph. Open the box, and pull out the costumes. Have "Mary" and "Joseph" put them on and stand near you.



Mary was going to have a baby—but not just any baby! An angel told Mary that the baby belonged to God. The baby was God’s very own Son! God was giving his Son, Jesus, to the people on earth to show them how much he loved them. Let’s see what happened to Mary and Joseph.

All of Mary’s and Joseph’s family members needed to travel to a town called Bethlehem to be counted. Let’s have Mary and Joseph lead the way, and you’ll all follow them. I’ll stay here. After your trip around the room, Mary and Joseph will bring you back here so you can pass by me and I can count you.

Have Mary and Joseph lead the rest of the children around the room. (Ask a Crew Leader to guide them if necessary.) Stay in the Bible Adventures area. As children pass in front of you, count them aloud. Announce the number to the room, and have children sit with their Crews.

The Birth of Jesus

Say: **While Mary and Joseph were in the crowded town of Bethlehem, they looked for a place to stay. The town was so full that the only place for them to spend the night was in a stable—like a barn—where animals lived. That night in the stable, God’s baby Son was born!**

Take the baby doll from the gift box, and hand it to Mary. **They named the baby “Jesus” because God told them to. Mary and Joseph were so happy that Jesus was born! Jesus was God’s own Son. What a special gift! GOD GIVES GOOD GIFTS (Yee-haw!), and Jesus is the greatest gift of all!**

Mary and Joseph set baby Jesus in a manger, which is a box that animals eat from. Let’s lay our baby Jesus in the lid of our gift box because Jesus is a gift of love from God. **GOD GIVES GOOD GIFTS. (Yee-haw!)**

Lead Mary in setting the baby doll in the box lid. Mary and Joseph may sit down near the box lid.



Angels and Shepherds

Say: **Outside the city, some shepherds were watching their sheep. That’s what shepherds do!** Choose three children to stand near you and pretend to be shepherds. Put the flannel shirts on the “shepherds” as costumes. Choose a few more children to kneel on hands and knees near the shepherds; put the white shirts on them, and let them *baa* like sheep.

Suddenly a bright light shone from heaven, and angels showed up! Select a tall Crew Leader to stand and hold a flashlight high overhead so it’s shining onto the doll.

Quickly drape white sheets over a few children, who will be angels. **The angels told the shepherds that God's Son had been born! The shepherds got so excited that they ran to worship Jesus, God's Son.** Let the shepherds and sheep walk (or run, if the sheep can keep up) around the room and back to the baby doll.

Let's all make a big circle around the baby Jesus, God's gift of love to us. We'll sing and celebrate because GOD GIVES GOOD GIFTS. (Yee-haw!)

Lead kids in singing and doing the motions to "Joy to the World!" following along with the Moo-sic & More DVD.

Wrap Up

After singing, gather the costumes and put them back in the box. Have children gather with their Crews to discuss these questions:

☀️ **What do you like about the way God showed us love by sending his Son, Jesus?**

☀️ **How does it feel to know that God loves you so much?**

After a minute or two, sound the Buckaroo Bell, and invite a few willing children to share their answers.

Say: **God loves us so much that he gave us his precious, perfect Son. Jesus was born on earth as a baby and then grew into a man who told people about God and showed people God's love. I'm glad that GOD GIVES GOOD GIFTS. (Yee-haw!) And I'm really glad that God gave us Jesus!**

Pray: **Dear God, thank you for sending the good gift of Jesus. Jesus shows that you love us so much. In Jesus' name, amen.**

Day 1 Games

Here you'll find three game options. Since children have about 25 minutes for games, you may not get through all of them. Choose the options that work best for your play area and the number of preschoolers you have.

GAME OPTION 1: Baby on Board

Before kids arrive, draw a face on one end of each plastic egg to make a "baby." Set up a playing area for each Crew by placing a Crew's Roundup Rope at one end as a starting line and an obstacle about 20 feet away. Form two groups and have them stand in lines on opposite sides of the room, facing each other.

Say: **Let's play a game to remind us that Mary and Joseph had to travel to Bethlehem when Jesus was about to be born. Hold up a plastic egg balanced on a spoon. Let's pretend that this egg is baby Jesus. You'll need to carry him in the spoon to Bethlehem across the room, then hand him to the first person in that line. Remember, eggs—and babies—are breakable, so you need to be careful.**

1. Have groups line up facing each other. Hand the first child in one line a spoon and a plastic egg. Explain that the child will balance the egg across the room and hand it and the spoon to the first person in the opposite line.
2. Begin the relay, and cheer Crew members on as they travel.
3. When everyone has had a turn, ask Crews to sit down.

Say: **Good job taking care of baby Jesus! Mary and Joseph took good care of the real baby Jesus when he was born. They knew he was a special gift from God. GOD GIVES GOOD GIFTS (Yee-haw!), and I'm so glad he gave us the special gift of Jesus!**

Supplies

- plastic Easter eggs (1 per Crew)
- permanent marker
- large spoons (1 per Crew)
- obstacles such as overturned laundry baskets (1 per Crew)



Supplies

- paper party plates in 2 colors (at least 1 plate per child)
- tape
- Moo-sic & More CD*
- CD player

*available from Group Publishing or your Group VBS supplier

GAME OPTION 2: Hug Hop

Before kids arrive, tape two colors of paper party plates around the floor of the playing area, leaving about 2 feet between them. If you're playing outside, this is a good game to play on cement.

Say: **Let's play a game about showing God's love to others. Remember, God showed his love to us by giving us Jesus, the best gift of all. We know that GOD GIVES GOOD GIFTS. (Yee-haw!)**

1. Turn on the music CD, and let preschoolers hop or take giant steps from one colored plate to the next.
2. After a few seconds, turn off the music and have children hurry to stand on a plate. Say: **If you're standing on a [name of color] spot, walk over and shake the hand of someone on a [name of other color] spot.** Pause while preschoolers do this.
3. Turn the music back on, and have children move from plate to plate again. After a few seconds, turn off the music and call out an instruction for kids standing on the *other color* plate. You might have children give hugs, give high-fives, pat each other's backs, or say "God gives good gifts!" Continue the game, alternating the instructions between the two colors so children have the experience of giving and receiving kind, loving actions.

Say: **GOD GIVES GOOD GIFTS. (Yee-haw!)** This game gave you a chance to show God's love to your VBS buddies! In real life, God showed his love by giving us the best gift of all—Jesus! I'm so glad that **GOD GIVES GOOD GIFTS! (Yee-haw!)**



GAME OPTION 3: Shake, Shake, Shake

Before kids arrive, form the chenille wires into hearts.

Say: **We've been learning that GOD GIVES GOOD GIFTS. (Yee-haw!) God gave us the very best gift of all when he gave us Jesus! God showed just how much he loves us by sending Jesus. Let's play a game about sending love to each other.**

1. Have preschoolers form pairs, and have each pair stand at opposite ends of a jump-rope and hold the ends.
2. Put a chenille-wire heart at one end of each rope, hanging from the rope.
3. When you say "go," have the child at the end of the rope opposite from the heart begin shaking the rope, trying to move the heart to his or her end.
4. When the heart reaches the other end of the rope, have the other child shake his or her rope end, trying to move the heart back. Play until each partner has moved the heart.

Say: **Hearts can remind us of love. In our game, we sent hearts of love to each other. God sent lots of love to us when he sent Jesus to live in our world. Jesus is the best gift ever! GOD GIVES GOOD GIFTS! (Yee-haw!)**

Supplies

- chenille wires (1 for every 2 children)
- jump-ropes (1 for every 2 children)





Day 1 Craft & Play

In this section we've given you three Craft & Play options to choose from. You'll likely have time for only two activities, so choose the options that work best for your space, time, and number of preschoolers.

It's a good idea to have a few other Craft & Play items on hand so children can explore and use their creativity if they finish one of these projects early. Consider having the following items in your area:

- * themed coloring sheets or coloring sheets of the Bible stories
- * water table and cups, funnels, and other water toys
- * modeling dough and fun cookie cutters
- * stuffed animals
- * preschool-age puzzles
- * stick horses

CRAFT & PLAY OPTION 1: Art Hearts

Before preschoolers arrive, cut heart shapes out of construction paper.

1. Set out washable markers, ink pads, and a variety of heart-shaped stampers and stickers.
2. Let preschoolers each cover a paper heart with heart stamps, stickers, and drawings of hearts. (This is a good time to teach younger preschoolers how to draw a simple heart.)
3. Let preschoolers create a few hearts as time allows.

Say: **Your hearts are so beautiful! You know, when we see a heart, we often think of love. And when people love each other, they sometimes give gifts to each other. God loves us so much that he gave us the greatest gift of all—Jesus! GOD GIVES GOOD GIFTS! (Yee-haw!)**

Supplies

- construction paper
- scissors
- heart stickers
- heart-shaped stampers
- washable ink pads*
- washable markers

*available from Group Publishing or your Group VBS supplier



Supplies

- dinner-size uncoated brown paper plates (1 per child)
- Horsin' Around Puppet Pieces*
- Natural-Colored Googly Eyes* (2 per child)
- black permanent marker
- scissors
- brown or black yarn
- stapler
- glue sticks
- transparent tape
- duct tape
- paint stirrers (1 per child)

*available from Group Publishing or your Group VBS supplier

CRAFT & PLAY OPTION 2: Horsin' Around

Before preschoolers arrive, punch out two ears and a heart-shaped nose from the Horsin' Around Puppet Pieces for each child. For each child, use black permanent marker to draw a long bridge of a horse nose and eyebrows on a brown paper plate.

Say: **Here at Yee-Haw VBS, we're learning that GOD GIVES GOOD GIFTS. (Yee-haw!) God gives us gifts because he loves us. I think our Bible Memory Buddy Ranger can help us remember that God loves us. Let's make a fun horse puppet to remind us of Ranger and God's good gifts.** Hold up a horse nose that you previously punched out. **Look! Ranger's nose is shaped like a heart! And hearts remind us of love. Every time you look at your Ranger puppet, you can remember how much God loves you!**

1. Give each child a brown paper plate, one nose, two ears, and two Natural-Colored Googly Eyes.
2. Have children use transparent tape to attach both ears to the top of the plate, from the back.
3. Have children hold the nose at the bottom of the plate so it extends slightly below the edge of the plate, and staple it in place.
4. Have children use transparent tape to attach yarn "hair" to the top of the plate, between the ears.
5. Have children glue two Natural-Colored Googly Eyes to the paper-plate face.
6. Have children turn the face over and use duct tape to attach a paint stirrer to the back as a handle.

When preschoolers have finished their crafts, have everyone stand in a circle with the Ranger puppets. Teach children the following easy cheer. When they're familiar with the cheer, let them repeat it as they trot around the room.

Giddyup, giddyup,

Ride your horse.

Good gifts come

From God, of course!



CRAFT & PLAY OPTION 3: Giddyup & Grow Chart

Connect with your VBS Director to determine the specifics of your outreach program, including how long children will have to collect donations and where to turn in donations.

Before preschoolers arrive, make a sample Giddyup & Grow Chart to show kids.

Say: **Did you know that each one of you is a gift from God? God made you exactly how he wanted you to be and put you in the family you have now. God made each of us different, but we all have one thing in common—we started out as teeny, tiny, helpless babies.**

Babies are warm and sweet and cuddly! They're growing and changing every day. All that growing means they need healthy food and good care, even before they're born. But not all moms can get the food and medical care they need.

Here at Yee-Haw VBS, we can collect money to help those moms and babies!

Hold up the Giddyup and Grow Chart you made ahead of time. Hang it on a wall so the bottom of the chart is 1 foot from the floor. **This is called a growth chart, and it can measure how tall a person is growing.** Call up one child and one Crew Leader. Have each person stand next to the chart so you can measure him or her. As you do, ask the person's name, and then ask the rest of the kids to call out responses to this question:

 **When you're this tall, what things might be fun to do?**

For the preschooler, children might call out answers like "play with stuffed animals" or "build forts." When you measure the Crew Leader, children might call out "drive" or "have a job."

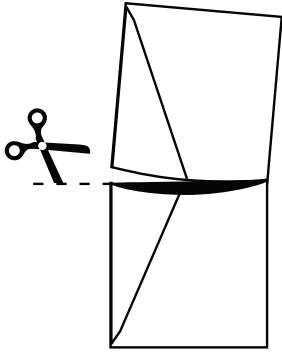
Say: **It takes a strong, healthy body and mind to do those things. We want to help other kids have a great healthy start so they have all that fun to look forward to! That's why you'll make a little pocket to put on your chart. Point to the pocket and read the Scripture on it. Until [date money is due] your family can add money to the pocket. Then you can take the money out and bring it in.**

Supplies

- Giddyup & Grow Charts* (1 per person)
- scissors
- business-size envelopes (1 for every 2 kids)
- tape
- adhesive-backed bows
- fine-tip washable marker
- trays for supplies (1 per Crew per rotation)
- Moo-sic & More CD*
- CD player

*available from Group Publishing or your Group VBS supplier





Make Pockets

Explain that kids will make pockets and attach them to the growth charts. Give each Crew a tray of supplies. Play the Moo-sic & More CD in the background as Crews work.

Have children follow these simple steps to create the envelopes.

1. Seal a business-size envelope. (You'll need only one envelope for every two children.) Then turn the envelope so it's "tall," and cut it across the middle to make two pockets.
2. Let children use the bows and markers to decorate their pockets to look like gifts. (If you'd like to write a Scripture verse on the chart, remind children to leave room.)
3. Have each child take a Giddyup & Grow Chart, and help children find the spot to tape the pocket to the growth chart. Be sure to add the child's name to his or her growth chart.
4. Let children decorate the chart with things about themselves—their favorite animals, foods, and friends.

Say: **The money we bring in will be such a special gift for moms and babies. Plus your growth chart will let you see all the good gifts God gives you as you grow! GOD GIVES GOOD GIFTS! (Yee-haw!) I think you are some of God's best gifts to me.**



Day 2

Bible Point: God gives good gifts.

Bible Story: Jesus dies and comes back to life. (John 16–21)

Bible Verse: “For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16)

Consider This...

- ✧ There’s interesting symbolism to Jesus carrying his own cross outside the city. In Genesis 22, Isaac carried the wood that Abraham would use to sacrifice Isaac...until God provided the ram as a sacrifice. And Leviticus 16 commands the priests to take the sin offering outside the camp or city. Jesus—the Lamb of God—became *our* sin offering!
- ✧ Roman soldiers usually crucified only non-citizens, lower-class citizens, or those accused of high treason or desertion (in wartime). The accused died a shameful, disgraceful, and agonizing death.
- ✧ Continuing the shame and disgrace of crucifixion, soldiers usually tossed the body of the crucified person into a pit. And Jesus, being penniless, didn’t have the money to pay for a formal burial. Yet Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus—both members of the Sanhedrin—stepped in. They took Jesus’ body and prepared it for burial themselves.
- ✧ Scholars estimate that a typical stone that was rolled over the opening of a tomb cave weighed anywhere from 1 to 3 tons!
- ✧ Although we usually think of angels with halos and wings, most times angels appear in the Bible, people describe them as looking like men. When Mary saw two angels near the tomb, she didn’t even realize they were angels!

Why It Matters...

On the surface, it may seem odd that we call Good Friday “good.” Yet without Jesus’ death, there would be no payment for sin. And there wouldn’t have been the triumphant, joyful resurrection!

Kids—and adults—find it hard to imagine *anything* good in the midst of sad times. What good can come from a loved one dying? How can a child find any good in a bully? And what’s so good about being left out or alone? God never promises that this life will be pain-free. But he *does* promise to be near when we’re hurting. What a beautiful gift! And, more important, God gave the gift of hope and joy to come. Use today’s experiences to help kids explore the eternal gift of life God gave us through Jesus.



Moo-sic & More

Review the Bible Point and Bible verse, get a visit from Rawhide McSpur, and worship with upbeat songs.



Preschool Bible Adventures

Learn that Jesus loves us so much that he died on the cross for our sins, then came back to life to be our friend forever.



Preschool Craft & Play

- Sprinkle Crosses
- Joyful Faces
- Surprised by Love



Preschool Games

- High in the Sky
- Forgiveness Tag
- Silly Statues

Closing Corral

Watch a kid-story video; then take part in a surprising, sciency experience that reminds kids that they matter to Jesus and he will always love them.



Day 2

Bible Story

Jesus dies and comes back to life. (John 16-21)

Day 2

Bible Adventures

Get Ready

- * Set the wooden cross against a wall in your Bible Adventures area.
- * Cut the sheets of construction paper into large cross shapes.
- * Use the red marker to draw a large outline of a heart on the white poster board.
- * Prep a few loops of duct tape. You'll use this to tape the back of the poster board to the cross later in the lesson.
- * Spread out a blanket for each Crew to sit on in your Bible Adventures area.

Welcome Crews

Welcome Crews, and introduce yourself again in case there are new children.

Say: **Hello, friends! Welcome back to Bible Adventures! I'm so glad you're here today. I can't wait to share today's totally true Bible story! Here at Yee-Haw VBS, we've been learning that **GOD GIVES GOOD GIFTS.** (Yee-haw!) And God's greatest gift of all was Jesus! Let's find out more about Jesus, God's greatest gift!**

Cheer for Jesus

Say: **Yesterday we learned how God sent Jesus to earth to be born as a baby. Jesus did so many amazing miracles that showed people God's love—he made lots and lots of sick people better, he fed thousands of people with just a little bit of bread and fish, and he calmed scary storms. Lots of people were excited that Jesus had come! They cheered for Jesus and even followed him around to hear what he had to say.**

Let's come up with a cheer for Jesus in each of our Crews!

Give Crews a couple of minutes to each come up with a short cheer celebrating Jesus. Let Crew Leaders know they'll need to help their Crew members. Then have each Crew share its cheer with the rest of the group.



HAVE YOU HERD?

If you don't have access to a free-standing wooden cross, you can cut a large cross shape out of butcher paper and tape it to the wall.

Supplies

- Bible bookmarked to John 3:16
- Buckaroo Bell*
- Ranger Bible Memory Buddies* (1 per child)
- Yee-Haw Carabiners* (1 per child)
- free-standing wooden cross
- white poster board
- thick, red permanent marker
- construction paper in assorted colors (1 sheet per Crew)
- scissors
- glue sticks (about 2 per Crew)
- duct tape
- Moo-sic & More CD*
- CD player
- posters from the Operation Kid-to-Kid Poster Pack*
- blankets (1 per Crew)

*available from Group Publishing or your Group VBS supplier



FIELD TEST FINDING

Preschoolers did a great job coming up with short, super-simple cheers. One Crew shouted, "Yay, yay, yay, Jesus!" Another Crew put their hands in the middle of their Crew circle, shouted "1, 2, 3, Jesus loves us!" and then raised their hands into the air. It was a great way for preschoolers to use their creativity and practice working together with others.

Jesus Is Arrested


Say: **Even though lots of people were excited Jesus had come, some people didn't like that Jesus showed God's love, and they didn't believe he was really God's Son. They wanted to get rid of Jesus, so they came up with a plan.**



One night, Jesus went with his friends to a special garden. Jesus liked to go to that garden to pray to God, his Father. Lead preschoolers in kneeling and making prayer hands. Jesus was praying to God when suddenly there was the sound of a big group of people coming toward Jesus and his friends. Lead preschoolers in patting their legs like footsteps.

It was the mean people who didn't like Jesus. And there were soldiers with them carrying swords.

Ask:

 **What would you do if you saw soldiers marching toward you?** Let preschoolers call out answers.

I would have been so scared! I probably would have run away! But that's not what Jesus did. Jesus stepped forward to meet the soldiers. Wow! That was brave of Jesus. Jesus is God's Son, so he knew exactly why those soldiers were there. He knew they had come to arrest him and take him away. And Jesus let them. I'll tell you why in a minute.

Jesus Goes to the Cross

Say: **The soldiers tied Jesus up and marched him away.** Lead everyone in standing and marching around the room one time. As you march, call out in cadence: **Left...left...left, right, left.** Then have Crews sit down.

The soldiers led Jesus to a place where they hurt him. The soldiers beat Jesus and made fun of him. They even made a crown out of thorns and put it on Jesus' head. Ow. That must have hurt so much.

Motion toward the wooden cross in your room. **Then the soldiers nailed Jesus' hands and feet to a wooden cross.** Lead preschoolers in making a fist with one hand and pounding it on the palm of the other hand three times. **A long time ago, people would be punished for doing wrong by being nailed to a cross. But Jesus had never done anything wrong. He was perfect and showed God's love to everybody, but they nailed Jesus to a cross anyway.**

After a few hours, Jesus died. Pause. His friends were so, so sad. Show me your saddest faces, too, friends, and your quiet mouths. Pause for the room to get quiet. **They put Jesus' body in a tomb, like a cave, and rolled a big rock in front of it. It was a very, very sad day.**

It might seem a little confusing that God's Son would let himself be hurt and even killed. Jesus did so many amazing miracles—he could have saved himself and stopped people from hurting him. But Jesus didn't. He let himself be killed. And do you know why? There are a few reasons. Point to children around the room. **Jesus died for [child's name] and [child's name] and [child's name] and everyone in this whole room.**

Tear Crosses

Give each Crew Leader a construction-paper cross.

Say: **Jesus died on the cross to take the punishment for all the wrong things we do. We all do wrong things that make God sad—things like lying, saying mean words, or hitting. And those wrong things keep us separated from God. Let's tear up these crosses while we think about wrong things we've done.**

Have each Crew Leader start by tearing off a large piece of the construction-paper cross. Then Crew Leaders can pass their crosses around their Crew circles for each preschooler to tear off a large piece so Crews end up with about six torn pieces of paper from the cross. Have each Crew place all the pieces into one pile in the center of the Crew's circle.

When Jesus died, he made it so we can be forgiven for all the wrong things we do. Jesus died on the cross because he loves us so much. But that's not the end of the story!



Jesus Is Alive!

Say: **Jesus' body was in the tomb for three days. Lead preschoolers in counting to three. But then something amazing happened! On the third day, Jesus' friends went back to the tomb and saw that the huge stone in front of the tomb was rolled away. The tomb was empty. That's because Jesus had come back to life! He was alive! What a great gift! GOD GIVES GOOD GIFTS. (Yee-haw!)**

God is so good and loving and powerful that he beat death! Jesus came back to life to show God's great love for us and that he is stronger and more powerful than any sad or bad thing.

Let's turn these torn and broken pieces from our paper crosses into something that reminds us of God's love for us!

Give each Crew a couple of glue sticks, and have Crews begin spreading glue over their construction-paper pieces. Pass the poster board around to each Crew for preschoolers to stick their paper pieces inside the heart outline.





Play “To God Be the Glory” (track 5), and have Crews sing along while they wait for their turn to glue their paper pieces to the poster board.

After each Crew has had a turn to glue the paper pieces inside the heart shape, place the loops of duct tape on the back of the poster board. Hold up the poster board for Crews to see.

Even though it was sad when Jesus died, Jesus did it because he loves us so much. Jesus took away all the wrong things we do and replaced them with his love. Tape the poster board to the center of the cross. And now Jesus is in heaven, making a home ready for us. When we ask Jesus to be our friend, we’ll get to live in heaven forever someday with God, too. Wow, what an amazing gift! **GOD GIVES GOOD GIFTS! (Yee-haw!)**

Distribute Bible Memory Buddies®

Say: **Before you leave, I have a special gift for you!** Hold up a Ranger Bible Memory Buddy. **This is a Bible Memory Buddy, and look—it’s the perfect animal for Yee-Haw VBS, a horse!** Point to the horse on the tag. **Our friend Ranger the horse loves to horse around! Every time you look at Ranger, you can remember the wild time you had at Yee-Haw VBS! Ranger can hang out on a carabiner like this.** Demonstrate how kids can attach Ranger to the carabiner.



Your Buddy Ranger can also help you remember the special words of our Bible verse. Hold up your Bible opened to John 3:16. **Here’s our Bible verse from John 3:16: “For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son.”** Point to the verse on the back of the Buddy. **The verse is written right here on Ranger’s back! God gave us his only Son, Jesus. Jesus is the greatest gift of all time. **GOD GIVES GOOD GIFTS!** (Yee-haw!)**

Here’s how we’ll give out the Bible Memory Buddies. You know, if you were out in the wild frontier, you might sit around a campfire at night to keep warm. God’s love is kind of like a nice fire that keeps us warm. **Let’s rub our hands together like we might at a campfire.** Lead preschoolers in rubbing their hands together as if to keep warm. **Now hold your nice, warm hands open as your Crew Leader gives out the Bible Memory Buddies.** When you get your Buddy, close your hands over it like this.

Demonstrate cupped hands, then closing your hands together.

Crew Leaders, when you give a Buddy, look the child in the eyes, say the child's name, and say, "God gave you the gift of Jesus!"

Give each Crew Leader enough Bible Memory Buddies for each child to have one. Have Crew Leaders distribute the Buddies as directed. After each preschooler has been affirmed, have Crew Leaders help children put the Buddies on the carabiners.





Day 2 Games

You may not get through all of these, so just choose the options that work best for the number of children you have and the playing area at your facility.

GAME OPTION 1: High in the Sky

Place the stuffed animals on the center of the parachute. Have preschoolers and Crew Leaders hold up the edges of the parachute, leaving the weighed-down center of the parachute touching the ground.

Say: **It was a sad day when Jesus died. When we're sad, our hearts can feel heavy and weighed down, like our stuffed animals are weighed down on our parachute. But when Jesus came back to life, what a great gift that was! I'm so glad that GOD GIVES GOOD GIFTS. (Yee-haw!) He gives us good friends and families who lift us up with silly jokes, hugs, and kind words when we're sad. Let's lift up these stuffed animals to remember that GOD GIVES GOOD GIFTS. (Yee-haw!)**

1. Turn on music, and let preschoolers shake the parachute to toss the stuffed animals in the air.
2. Challenge the group to see how high they can toss the animals without them falling off the parachute.

Supplies

- parachute*
- several stuffed animals
- Moo-sic & More CD
- CD player

*available from Group Publishing or your Group VBS supplier



Supplies

- pool noodles to mark boundaries
- Moo-sic & More CD*
- CD player

*available from Group Publishing or your Group VBS supplier

GAME OPTION 2: Forgiveness Tag

Before kids arrive, use pool noodles to mark boundaries for your game.

1. Choose one child to be “It” and a willing Crew Leader to be “Jesus.” Have the rest of the Crew Leaders join in with the preschoolers.
2. Explain that if preschoolers are tagged, they will have to freeze in place with their arms stretched out in the shape of a cross. If Jesus comes up to a child and tags him or her, saying, “God will always love you!” that child can rejoin the game. Have Jesus stand in that child’s spot for five to 10 seconds before unfreezing himself and choosing another frozen child to tag and replace.
3. Play the Moo-sic & More CD as children play, and after a couple of minutes, choose a new child to be It and a different Crew Leader to be Jesus.

Ask:

 **How did you feel when the Crew Leader took your place and you got to play the game again?**

Say: **We can feel even happier knowing that Jesus does the same thing for us! Jesus came to show God’s love and forgiveness by taking our place for the wrong things we do. Because God gave us Jesus and forgave us for the wrong things we do, we know that **GOD GIVES GOOD GIFTS!** (Yee-haw!)**



GAME OPTION 3: Silly Statues

Say: **It's fun to celebrate God's good gifts—like the wonderful gift of Jesus! One way we can do that is by moving to our awesome Moo-sic & More CD. Let's move!**

Turn on the Moo-sic & More CD, and let kids move, dance, or do exercises with the music. (You may want to have a few balloons or inflatable beach balls for children to bop around as the music plays.) Explain that when the music stops, children should freeze and remain unmoving, like statues. After about 20 seconds, turn off the music and call "Freeze!" Children should stop in whatever pose they're in—the sillier, the better!

Walk around and admire your funny frozen "statues," and see if you can get any of them to talk or move (without touching them, of course). If you manage to get a child to move, talk, or laugh within 30 seconds, that child will be the next one to call "Freeze" and try to make kids move. Play for a few rounds.

Say: **We're learning that GOD GIVES GOOD GIFTS. (Yee-haw!) And the best gift God gave us is Jesus, who takes away our sins. We can be happy about our good God and the good gifts he gives!**

Supplies

- Moo-sic & More CD*
- CD player
- beach balls or balloons (optional)

*available from Group Publishing or your Group VBS supplier





Day 2

Craft & Play

CRAFT & PLAY OPTION 1: Sprinkle Crosses

Before children arrive, color a few cups of rice. (Children will actually only use a few tablespoons each.) To color the rice, pour a tablespoon of vinegar into a resealable plastic bag, along with a few drops of food coloring and a few drops of essential oil. The more food coloring you use, the more vibrant the color will be. Then pour in a cup of rice. Seal the bag, and shake it until all the rice is colored. Spread the rice on wax paper to dry for about an hour.

Give each child a paper plate and two craft sticks, and help children use a Glue Dot to form the sticks into a cross. Crew Leaders can write children's names on one side of their crosses. Then let children spread glue on the cross shape (on the side without their names) and sprinkle colored rice on the glue. Children can use as much rice as they wish!

Say: **I'm having so much fun learning that GOD GIVES GOOD GIFTS. (Yee-haw!) Today we're learning that Jesus died on a cross to show us God's love and forgiveness. Your cross craft can remind you of how much Jesus loves you. Jesus is the greatest gift of all!**

Supplies

- uncooked rice
- food coloring
- vinegar
- essential oil (just a few drops to neutralize the vinegar smell)
- resealable plastic bags (1 for each color of rice you make)
- wax paper
- wide craft sticks (2 per child)
- Glue Dots* (1 per child)
- white glue
- paper plates
- fine-tip permanent marker

*available from Group Publishing or your Group VBS supplier



Supplies

- plain paper plates (1 per child)
- craft sticks (1 per child)
- Natural-Colored Googly Eyes* (2 per child)
- crayons or markers
- pieces of curling ribbon or yarn “hair” (optional)
- tape
- glue sticks

*available from Group Publishing or your Group VBS supplier

CRAFT & PLAY OPTION 2: Joyful Faces

Give each child a paper plate, and direct Crew Leaders to write children’s names on the back. Have children show you their happiest, smiliest, most joyful faces.

Say: **Your joyful faces me happy! Each of you is a gift to me from God. GOD GIVES GOOD GIFTS. (Yee-haw!) Let’s make something to remind us that we can be happy because of God’s good gifts. Let’s make happy faces!**

Let preschoolers use the craft supplies you’ve provided to make pictures of their happy faces on their paper plates. Crew Leaders can help tape yarn or curling ribbon “hair” to the plates. Then when preschoolers finish, Crew Leaders can tape a large craft stick to the back of each plate for a handle.



CRAFT & PLAY OPTION 3: Surprised by Love

Before preschoolers arrive, cut coffee filters into heart shapes, making one for each child. Give a heart shape to each child, and have Crew Leaders write children's names along the edge.

Remind children that Jesus died on a cross to take the punishment for the wrong things we do. Help children use a white crayon to draw a cross in the center of their coffee-filter hearts.

Say: **Jesus came back to life after three days.** Have preschoolers each go over their cross with the white crayon *three* times. Have each child set his or her heart on a paper plate; then let children use eyedroppers to add color to the hearts. The color will spread, but it won't color the cross!

Say: **The cross appeared when you added the color! Jesus' friends were surprised when he appeared—they thought he was gone forever! God loves us so much that he sent Jesus to die and come back to life. Jesus is the greatest gift God gave us! GOD GIVES GOOD GIFTS! (Yee-haw!)**

Supplies

- white coffee filters (1 per child)
- paper plates (1 per child)
- scissors
- white crayons
- liquid watercolor paints
- plastic trays or cookie sheets (1 per child)
- small eyedroppers or paintbrushes (1 per child)



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