

Adventures with GOD!

MY SAVIOR IS A GIFT FROM GOD (B.3.WINTER.3)

Biblical Reference	Luke 2:1-20
Key Verse	Luke 2:11
Key Concept	God has given me the best gift, and it is Jesus, my Lord and Savior.
Educational Objectives	At the end of the class today, the children will be able to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tell the story of Christmas from the angels' point of view. 2. Differentiate between a Christmas celebration that puts Jesus at the center and one that does not. 3. Say the Key Verse by memory.

Life Application

Christmas is a wonderful time of celebration. It's a time of year when we give and get gifts from those we love. Christmas is a time when we celebrate the greatest gift of love ever given by God – Jesus Christ, the son of God, our Savior and Lord. God wants to have a relationship with each and every child, and each can come to know God through Jesus. God wants us to share this gift with others. Invite the children to think about ways that they can share this amazing love with others.

Possible Activities and Class Plan

Activity	Materials	Time
My GROW Adventure	GROW Adventure materials	5 minutes
Opening Prayer	Candle	1 minute
Bible Reading	Bible	5 minutes
Activity	Illustrations, instruments	10 minutes
Craft	See instructions	10 minutes
Bible Exploration	Bible, paper, costumes	15 minutes
My GROW Adventure	Review	5 minutes
Closing Prayer	Candle	1 minute

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INSTRUCTIONS

My GROW Adventure with God Weekly Review: As children enter, take time to have them reflect on their adventure with God booklets, and either discuss or use art materials to express their journey during the past week. You may wish to add any art work, written poems, prayers or songs to a GROW wall in the room. You can find my GROW Adventure with God materials at CovChurch.org/children/adventures-with-god.

Opening Prayer: Gather children around a candle. Light the candle, and explain that we are entering into a special time with God. Encourage the children to hold their hands out in front of them, palms up, as a sign they are ready to receive what God has for them today.

Prayer Example: Lord God, thank you for making us, for loving us, for forgiving us, and guiding us. We know you are here with us right now. As we enter into your word, the Bible, help us draw close to you, to understand and to listen to what you have to say to us. Amen

(For safety sake, you may wish to extinguish the candle after the prayer.)

Bible Reading: Explain that as we read the Bible, we do that first to spend time with God. Children can remain with hands out stretched, palms up, to receive the word as it's being read. Alternatively they can be invited to draw what they hear. Read Luke 2:8-15 two times, and ask children to respond.

Question Examples: What did you notice in this passage? How does it make you feel? Was there anything you would ask God about that you didn't understand or was confusing? Is God saying anything to you through the passage?

Activity: Continue to add illustrations and signs to your classroom decorations each week. This week the sign should be even bigger, and it should simply say, "Jesus." Today we are celebrating and remembering the birth of our Lord and Savior. Remind the children that while Jesus was born a baby, he continued to grow and become a small boy and then a big boy and then an adult. Sometimes it's hard for children to understand the connection between a baby born in a manger and the man that was crucified.

For this activity, gather illustrations that depict different parts of the Christmas story. You can find them online, or use Christmas cards, or illustrations from magazines. Spread them out on a table, and ask the children to look at them and then to share which one most caught their

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attention. Ask them how our Christmas celebrations are different when we recognize that Jesus is the reason for the celebration. What do those celebrations look like if we don't remember Jesus' birth?

Craft: Make a Card: Cut out illustrations from old Christmas cards, and glue them on colorful cardstock to make a special Christmas card to give to someone. Write the Key Verse inside. Color a Picture: Color the illustration of Jesus birth found on page 5. Glue onto colorful cardstock, and write the Key Verse underneath the picture. Give this beautiful picture of Jesus' birth to someone you want to tell about Jesus' birth.

Bible exploration: Children at this age love to act. For today's Bible exploration, write the names of the different characters in today's story on little slips of paper, and let each child choose one. Have dress-up clothes available so that they can get into character. Garland can be used for the angels, scarves can be used as head dressings for the shepherds, etc. As you read the story from Luke 2, have the children act it out.

After they've acted out the passage, review the story together. Ask them to put themselves in the place of the angels. What do they think the angels were feeling, thinking, etc? What would it have been like to share this incredible news with the world? How can we follow the angels' example?

Spend some time singing songs about Jesus' birth. Pray for the children, that they would have the courage and joy to share the story of Jesus' birth with their friends and family.

Today's GROW Adventure with God Review:

G=God's Word: What is the story? (Give children an opportunity to express their understanding of the story).

R=Relationships: Is there anything in today's Bible story that shows us how we should or shouldn't share God's love with others? (Remind children that sometimes God uses the stories of the Bible to show us how we shouldn't act toward God or others. Give them a chance to consider how we might show God's love instead).

O=Outward Action: Is there anything in the Bible story that shows us how we should help or serve God or others? (Explore concrete ways the children could live this out in the coming week).

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W=Worship: Is there anything in the Bible story that shows us how we should accept God's love for us and others? Ask: How do you feel about God? What would you like to say to God?

Closing Prayer: Gather children around the candle again. As you light the candle explain that the flame is something that is present in the light and the darkness. The candle reminds us that God is always with us. Is there anything anyone wishes to say to God? After children have responded, close the prayer time.

Prayer Example: Lord God, we thank you that you are always with us and always love us. It's good to be with you. Thank you for what we have learned today. Thank you for being with us and for teaching us through the Bible. Help us to remember what you have taught us today and to live it out when we leave. Amen

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