

Jesus Is Born

Never Fear, Jesus Is Here!

Luke 2:1-20

Bible Point

Jesus rescues us...in unexpected ways.

Purpose

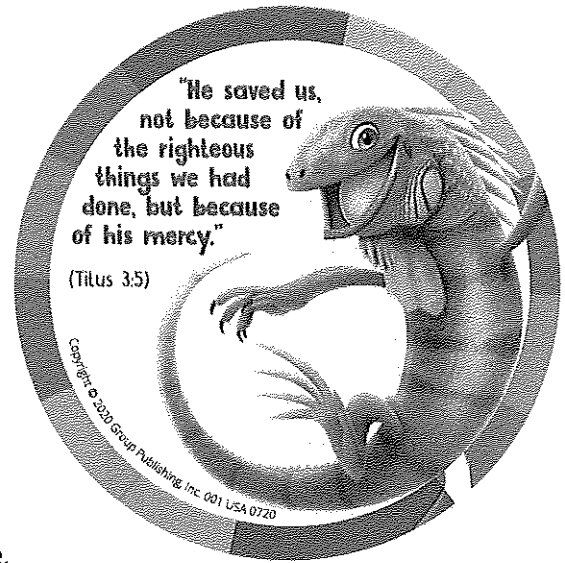
Have you ever eaten your favorite cake when it wasn't your birthday? Or bought flowers, not on Valentine's Day, but "just because"? Sometimes it's nice to simply enjoy our favorite things.

The same can be true of Luke 2. When explored outside the month of December, it becomes a little simpler. Less fuss, more foundational. God came to us. All the sin, pain, and mess-ups in the Old Testament suddenly had a solution. A baby, born to simple people in a simple town, would ultimately rescue the whole world. Wow!

Elementary kids might be surprised to explore the Christmas story outside of the holiday season. But through this lesson, together you'll experience why Jesus' birth matters, not just at Christmastime, but every single day of our lives.

Prayer

Jesus, thanks for coming to our world, not as a superhero, but as a baby. And thanks that you keep coming to me and the kids I teach every day. Abide with us today as we discover truth from your Word together. In your name, amen.



Prep

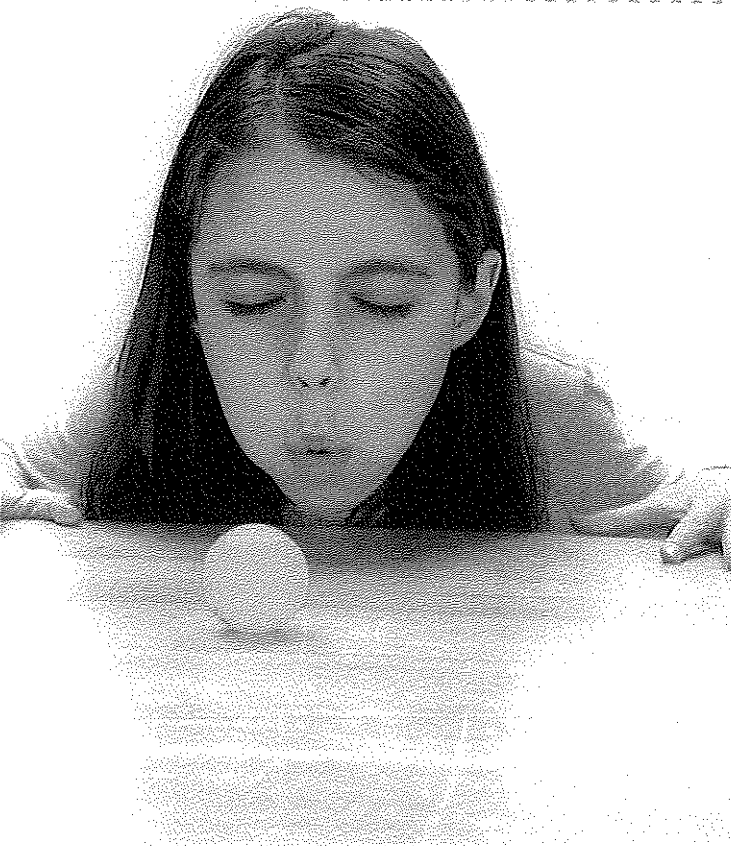
Opening Options	Sing & Play	Bible Discovery & Friendship Finale	Apply-It Options
<input type="checkbox"/> Option Cards* <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Ping-Pong Journey</i> : ping-pong balls <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Strong Paper</i> : paper, classroom objects (like Bibles or blocks), masking tape	<input type="checkbox"/> countdown video* <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Music Video</i> DVD* <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Buddy Video</i> DVD* <input type="checkbox"/> Guac Bible Memory Buddy poster* <input type="checkbox"/> media player <input type="checkbox"/> Bible (bookmark Titus 3:5)	<input type="checkbox"/> "Jesus Is Born" Bible Story poster* <input type="checkbox"/> Guac Bible Memory Buddy stickers* (1 per child) <input type="checkbox"/> Take-It-Home Flyers* (Unit 3, Week 1) (1 per child) <input type="checkbox"/> Bible (bookmark Luke 2:1, 3, 6-7, 8-12) <input type="checkbox"/> masking tape <input type="checkbox"/> paper and pencils	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Explore More</i> : Bibles, paper, pencils, small box <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Game</i> : chairs, media player, music

* in your **Simply Loved Kit**



Opening Options

Set up one—or both—of these intro activities to start your time together. Each activity connects kids to the Bible Point and to each other. Cut apart these Option Cards, and place one by each activity you choose. Crew Guides will follow the directions and build friendships with kids as they make discoveries together!



Ping-Pong Journey

Supplies

- ping-pong balls

Have a friend stand across the table from you with hands cupped at the edge. Blow the ping-pong ball so it “travels” to your friend’s hands.

In today’s Bible story, Mary and Joseph had to travel to a different town.

? When have you traveled to a different town? What did you do there?

When they got to the town, Mary had a baby! She placed the baby in a manger. This was no ordinary baby—it was Jesus, our rescuer. Today we’ll discover that Jesus rescues us.

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Strong Paper

Supplies

- paper, classroom objects (like Bibles or blocks), masking tape

Roll and tape paper into a cylinder to see how much weight it can hold.

? What’s something surprising that happened to you this week?

A piece of paper doesn’t look very strong, but it’s surprising how much it can hold. When Jesus came to earth, he didn’t appear to be able to rescue anyone from anything. But God works in surprising ways. Today we’ll discover how Jesus rescues us.

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Opening

Now's a great time for Opening Options. Choose one—or both—to introduce today's Bible discoveries.



countdown video (1 minute)

Help kids transition, clean up the activities, and sit with Connect Crews. A Connect Crew is a small group of kids with one Crew Guide.

Sing & Play

Hi there! It's so good to see you all today. Let's get started with a song. It's one people have sung to praise God for hundreds of years! Let's sing it together now.



"Doxology" music video

Bible Point

We praise God the Father because he sent his Son, Jesus, to earth to rescue us from sin and be our forever friend. Jesus rescues us. That's our Bible Point today, so every time you hear someone say the words Jesus rescues us, I want you to respond in a certain way. Do what I do!

- Extend your arms at your sides as you look up, smile, and say, "Yay, Jesus!"
- Repeat several times.

Kids remember what they repeat! So be sure to say today's Bible Point A LOT. Have fun with it! Kids will love listening for it and responding with "Yay, Jesus!"

God created us, and he loves us so much. But sin messed up God's world, and it messes up our hearts, too. We need someone to help us with our sin problem. That's why God sent Jesus to earth a long time ago. Jesus rescues us. (Yay, Jesus!) When we need a friend or help choosing God's way, Jesus is right there with us. Whatever you're going through, Jesus is ready to help you. Let's sing a song to ask him to rescue and help us today.

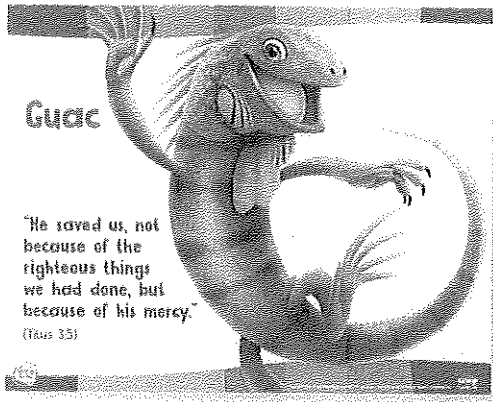


"Rescue Me" music video

Supplies

- Bible
- media player
- Music Video DVD
 - "Doxology" music video
 - "Rescue Me" music video
 - "Good in Every Way" music video
- Buddy Video DVD
 - Guac Bible Memory Buddy video (Week 1)
- Guac Bible Memory Buddy poster





Bible Memory Buddy & Verse

Let's meet our Bible Memory Buddy. It's Guac the iguana. How much do you know about these creatures? Let's find out with a This-or-That Challenge! You'll hear two fun facts about iguanas. It's up to you to decide which is true—this fact or that!

- ❓ Iguanas are big lizards. About how long are they: 4 feet or 7 feet?
- Have everyone hop four times to vote for *this* (4 feet) or seven times to vote for *that* (7 feet).
- Make a drumroll sound by patting your thighs or the floor.
- Dramatically give the answer: Iguanas can grow up to 7 feet because their tails are so long!
- Watch the Bible Memory Buddy video to meet Guac.



Guac Bible Memory Buddy video (Week 1)



Show the Bible. The Bible is God's true story of love! The Bible may seem like a big book for grown-ups, but it's for everyone! Our Bible Memory Verse is Titus 3:5. Let's say the verse together. I'll say a line, and then you repeat after me.

"He saved us, *(extend arms out at your sides to form a cross)*
not because of the righteous things we had done, *(shake head no)*
but because of his mercy." *(give yourself a hug)*
(Titus 3:5)

The word *righteous* means right or good. Jesus doesn't rescue people because we're always right or good; he rescues people because he loves us and wants to help us. That's good news! Jesus rescues us. *(Yay, Jesus!)* Let's sing and tell Jesus that's he's good in every way!



"Good in Every Way" music video

Bible Discovery

Circle Up & Connect

Let's circle up and spend a little time simply getting to know each other in smaller groups called **Connect Crews**.

- Have kids form Connect Crews with one helper—or Crew Guide—per group.
- Invite kids to sit in knee-to-knee circles with their Connect Crews.
- Have kids give their Crew Guides and each other fist bumps with fireworks.
- Have kids take turns saying their names and answering this question. Crew Guides go first.
- ❓ **If you could have a superpower that would help people, what would it be?**

The Heart of the Matter

While Crews discuss, use masking tape to make two long lines about 4 feet away from parallel walls in your room.

Have I got a challenge for you! Have everyone stand with their Crews behind the tape line at one side of the room.

Your goal is to go to the other side of the room. However, no part of your body can touch the floor between the tape lines. Talk together, and try to figure out how to get across. Give Crews 30 seconds to talk.

Okay. Ready? On your mark, get set, go! Pause and watch Crews' inaction. **Hmm. You're all still standing there.**

- ❓ **What's keeping you from moving toward the goal?**
- ❓ **How did you feel when you couldn't find a way to get across?** Invite several responses from the whole group.

In our Bible story today, God's people were feeling helpless and stuck, too. They'd been waiting for God to help them for a long time. Then God did something surprising. His rescue plan was bigger than they could ever have imagined. Let's dive in and see what happened.

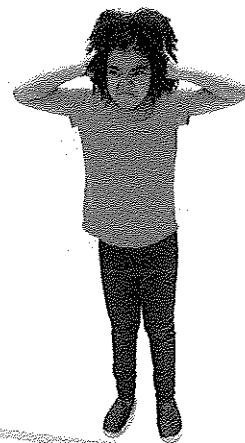
Experience the Bible Story

Give each Crew paper and pencils for each person. **Today's Bible story comes from the book of Luke in the New Testament of the Bible. It may be familiar to you because we tell it every year at Christmastime. But it's not a story only for the month of December; this story is important because it tells how Jesus rescues us. (Yay, Jesus!)**

Supplies

- Bible
- "Jesus Is Born" Bible Story poster
- masking tape
- paper and pencils

We call helpers **Crew Guides**. If you lead a small class, you can be the **Crew Guide**. Simply circle up with the kids. If you have helpers, form smaller groups so each child can be known—and so kids can befriend your helpers, too!



Welcome a few responses. Be sure to summarize what kids say so everyone can hear.

So leave the Christmas trees, twinkle lights, and gingerbread houses packed away, and let's take a look at this story as if it happened on just another weekday and not a holiday vacation. And instead of simply listening to the story, you'll all play an important part. Get ready to follow my lead! Tell kids to stay at the side of the room but sit in Crew circles.

When the story begins, God's people were living in the land God had promised to their ancestor, Abraham, a long time before. But life wasn't good for them. Give someone beside you a comforting pat on the back.

God's people were part of the Roman Empire, and that meant Roman rulers could boss them around and tell them what to do. Crew Guides, put on your best bossy faces and tell your Crews to:

- Do 10 jumping jacks.
- Give you their shoes.
- Put their shoes back on because their feet are stinky.
- Hurry!

While the Romans bossed them around, God's people remembered that God had spoken through prophets and told them that someday a rescuer would come and help them. They wanted that rescuer really, really bad. Everyone, clasp your hands in front of you like you're begging, and say, "Please, please, please rescue us!" Pause.

Now, if you needed someone to come and rescue you, who would you want to come? Take a piece of paper and a pencil and quickly draw a picture of a hero who could come and rescue God's people from Roman rule. You have only a minute, so draw fast! Give kids a minute to draw.

Okay. Hold on to your drawings. Your heroes aren't saving the day just yet. Let's read and see what the Roman ruler told God's people to do.



Read aloud Luke 2:1, 3.

Everyone had to go to their hometown to be counted, including a man named Joseph and his fiancée, Mary. Even though Mary was expecting a baby, they both had to go to Bethlehem, the city of David.

David was a king earlier in God's story. A mighty guy. Brave. Strike a brave pose with me. Pause. David was musical. Pretend to play the harp with me. Pause. That David guy was a real hero for God's people. Maybe he looked like some of the pictures you drew. Wave your picture in the air, then hold it on your lap again. Pause. God's people may have hoped someone like *David* would rescue them from the Romans.

God's people expected a rescuer, or Messiah, who'd be strong and smart and, well...at least a grown-up! But God had other plans. He sent his Son, Jesus, to earth as a baby! And he was born in Bethlehem. Jesus rescues us. (*Yay, Jesus!*) What a surprise! Let's read about it.



Read aloud Luke 2:6-7.

If you'd like, play the countdown video again while kids draw.

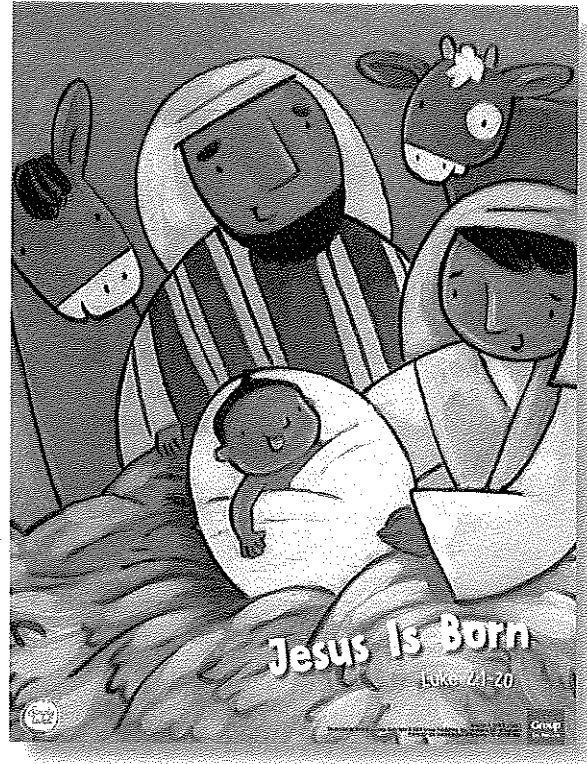
An unmarried couple? A baby? A manger? This probably wasn't what God's people pictured when they thought about how God would rescue them. But God wasn't just rescuing his people from the Romans; he was rescuing the whole world from sin. He was sending Jesus to help people—his special creations—because he loved them so much. And no one noticed.


Show the Bible Story poster.

- ② How does this picture compare with the one you drew? Invite a few responses from the whole group.

God's Son, Jesus, had come to earth! But no one really noticed. So God had angels make a big announcement. Let's read about it. Motion to a few Connect Crews. If you're on this side of the room, act out what the angels did as I read. Motion to the other Connect Crews. If you're on that side, act out what the shepherds did.

So if I say an angel appeared, angels, what will you do? Pause. And if I say the shepherds were terribly frightened, what will you do, shepherds? Pause. Okay. I think we're ready.



 Read aloud with expression Luke 2:8-12. Pause after each verse for kids to act it out.

The Messiah had been born. The word *messiah* means “promised rescuer.” But this promised rescuer wasn't in a palace or preparing for battle. Nope. He was a baby lying in a manger.

The shepherds ran to see this baby Messiah. And there he was. I wonder what they said to baby Jesus? And I wonder if Mary and Joseph hesitated to let people who smelled like sheep near baby Jesus. This story is really wonderful—it's full of things that make us wonder a little. And that's okay! Let's wonder and talk a bit in our Connect Crews.

- Have Crews sit in knee-to-knee circles.
- ② When it comes to Jesus' birth, what do you wonder about? Invite Crew Guides to share first.
- Crew Guides give thumbs-up when everyone has shared.

God's people needed help, but surely they never expected God to move like this. Instead of sending a David 2.0 to earth, God went himself. Baby Jesus was fully God and fully human. It's hard for us to understand, but it's true. God loved us so much that he came to earth to feel our sadness and forgive our sin. God loved us so much, he made a way for us to be near him.

Hmm. I have a way to help you get across this room.

Have Crews line up behind the tape again, with Crew Guides at the end of each line. Have the first person in each line place a drawing on the floor and step on it. Have the second people in line pass their drawings to the first people to put on the floor in front of them again so they can both step forward on another paper. Have the remaining kids in line pass their papers, too, and have the Crew Guides offer theirs as well but remain behind. Kids will be able to move forward, one step at a time, by walking on their drawings.

You made it! Have Crews give each other high-fives and then circle up with their Connect Crews in their original spots in the center of the room. I provided an unexpected way to help you get across the room. And, through Jesus, God provided an unexpected way for us to be close friends with God. Jesus rescues us. (*Yay, Jesus!*)

Now's a great time for Apply-It Options. Choose one—or both—of the following reinforcement activities to support today's Bible discoveries before the Friendship Finale.

Apply-It Options

Choose one—or both—of these activities to support kids' learning after Bible Discovery.

Explore More

Supplies

- Bibles, paper, pencils, small box

Isaiah, one of God's prophets, talked about the promised Rescuer. Let's read what he said about Jesus.



Distribute Bibles, and help kids find and read Isaiah 9:6 together.

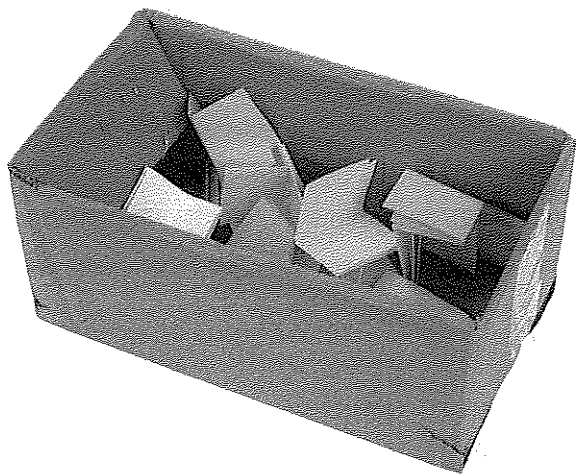
Jesus came to our world a long time ago. But what if he'd come to the world today as a baby? You're a kid expert, so what would Jesus need to know about being a kid today?

Hold up the box. **Let's imagine this box is a manger. Instead of filling it with hay for animals, we'll put our advice for Jesus inside to welcome him to our world.**

Give everyone paper and a pencil, and invite kids to write a note to Jesus. Give a few minutes to write and respond, then ask the following question to welcome kids' thoughts.

- 🗣️ **What would you tell Jesus about being a kid today?**

God chose just the right time to give the world Jesus, and it was thousands of years ago instead of today. But Jesus' life on earth changed everything. Jesus isn't far away. He's with us, and he's ready to help us with all the things we wrote about. Jesus rescues us. (Yay, Jesus!)



Game

Supplies

- chairs, media player, music

Play Musical Chairs.

- Form a circle with chairs, with one fewer chair than players.
- Play music, and have kids walk around the chairs.
- When the music stops, kids scramble to sit down. The child without a chair is out.
- Continue playing until one chair and one child remain.
- 🗣️ **How did you feel as you walked around the chairs?**

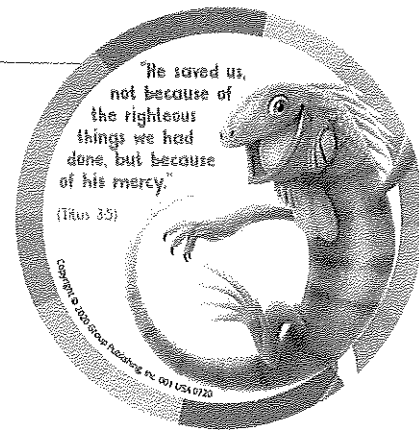
Before Jesus was born, God's people may have felt that way, too. They were anxious and wondered when something would happen. But God's plan was different from what they expected. It didn't involve an army or a lot of people. Instead, it centered around one special baby. Jesus rescues us! (Yay, Jesus!)



Supplies

- Guac Bible Memory Buddy stickers (1 per child)
- Take-It-Home Flyers (Unit 3, Week 1) (1 per child)

Friendship Finale



Have kids sit in knee-to-knee circles with their Connect Crews.

Guac, our Bible Memory Buddy, helps us remember Jesus rescues us. (*Yay, Jesus!*) You'll each receive a Guac sticker to remind you of Jesus' love and forgiveness throughout your week. You can wear it now or keep it for later. Crew Guides will give each person a sticker like this.

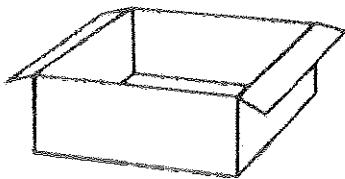
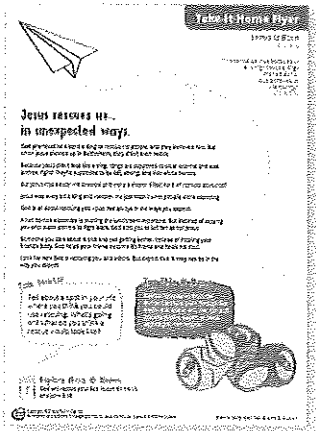
- Ask a willing child to help you demonstrate the following actions.
- Kids stand a few feet in front of their Crew Guides. While holding the Bible Memory Buddy stickers, Crew Guides take a giant step toward each child in their Crew and give the Guac sticker.
- As they give each child a Bible Memory Buddy sticker in the same way, Crew Guides say, "[Child's name], Jesus rescues you."
- Crew Guides give thumbs-up when everyone has received a sticker.

Saying each child's name in a loving way helps kids simply experience Jesus' love through you!

Jesus rescues us. (*Yay, Jesus!*) From what? Well, the Bible calls Jesus *Emmanuel*. That means "God with us." So Jesus rescues you from being alone. The name *Jesus* means "the Lord saves." Jesus saves us from sin in our lives. Jesus came to earth, died on a cross, and came back to life. He forgives us when we choose our way instead of God's way, and he promises to never leave us—ever!

I'd like to read you something about our friend Jesus. As you listen, close your eyes and imagine you're a baby again. Pretend to hold tight to your favorite blanket, and listen as I read about Jesus.

- Read the first section of the Unit 3, Week 1 Take-It-Home Flyer.
- Now I'll give you one of these flyers to help you talk about Jesus' love in your Connect Crews *and* at home, too.
- Distribute Take-It-Home Flyers to Crew Guides, and have them share about their own friendship with Jesus as they discuss the "Talk Starter" question and then invite kids to share.
- Kids share prayer requests—things they'd like to tell Jesus—in their Connect Crews.
- Connect Crews pray together.
- Crew Guides distribute Take-It-Home Flyers and follow the directions to help kids fold the paper to "fly" home. ○



Jesus Is Born

(Luke 2:1-20)

“He saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy.”
(Titus 3:5)



Jesus rescues us... in unexpected ways.

God promised he'd send a King to rescue his people, and they believed him. But when Jesus showed up in Bethlehem, they didn't even notice.

Because Jesus didn't *look* like a king. Kings are supposed to wear crowns and lead armies, right? They're supposed to be tall, strong, and ride white horses.

But Jesus was a *baby*. He drooled and wore a diaper. What kind of rescuer does *that*?

Jesus was every bit a king and rescuer. He just wasn't what people were expecting.

God is all about rescuing you—just not always in the ways you expect.

A not-so-nice classmate is making the lunchroom miserable. But instead of zapping you with super-powers to fight back, God asks you to tell her about Jesus.

Someone you care about is sick and not getting better. Instead of healing your friend's body, God helps your friend become *his* friend and heals his soul.

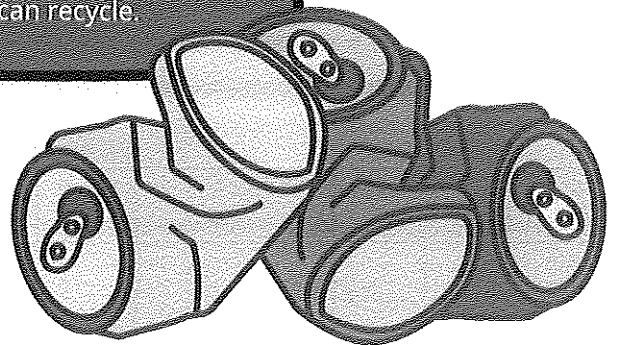
Look for how God is rescuing you and others. But expect this: It may not be in the way you expect!

Talk-Starters

Tell about a spot in your life where you think you could use rescuing. What's going on? What do you think a rescue would look like?

Try This @ Home

Rescue recyclables from the dump! Carefully poke through the trash cans where you live, and pull out any plastic, paper, or metal objects you can recycle.



Explore More @ Home

God will rescue you! See Psalm 91:14-15 and John 3:16.



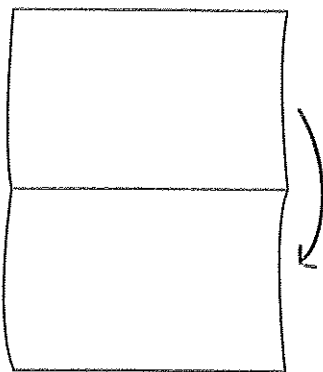
Fold this page to hold treasures at home!

Fold a box, and imagine it's a manger

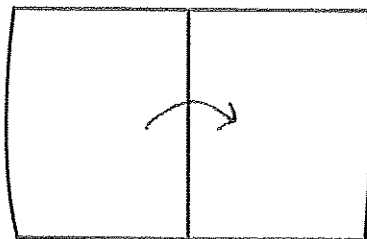
...but instead of putting donkey food inside, let it hold something your family treasures—like candy, coins, or the remote control!

Here's how:

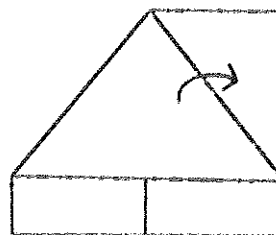
- 1 Fold the paper in half as shown.



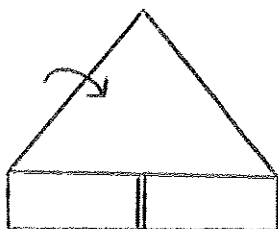
- 2 Fold in half again the other way.



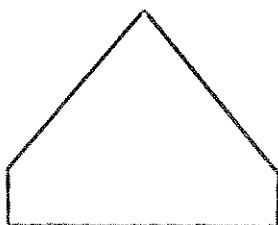
- 3 Flatten one corner to make a triangle.



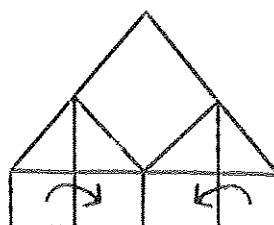
- 4 Flip over and repeat on the other side so it looks like this.



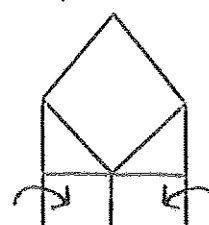
- 5 Rotate the paper, and flatten it the other way so it looks like this.



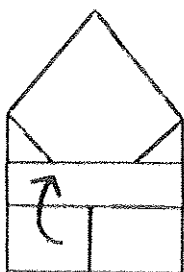
- 6 Fold one side into the center, then fold the other side into the center.



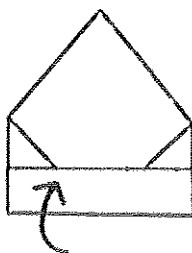
- 7 Flip it over to the other side, and fold those sides to the center, too.



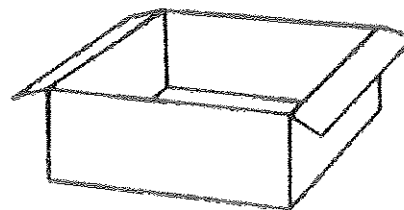
- 8 Fold the bottom up on one side.



- 9 Flip it over, and fold the bottom up on the other side, too.



- 10 Flip it upside down, and flatten the bottom. Voila—a box!



Jesus Is Born

Never Fear, Jesus Is Here!

Luke 2:1-20

Bible Point

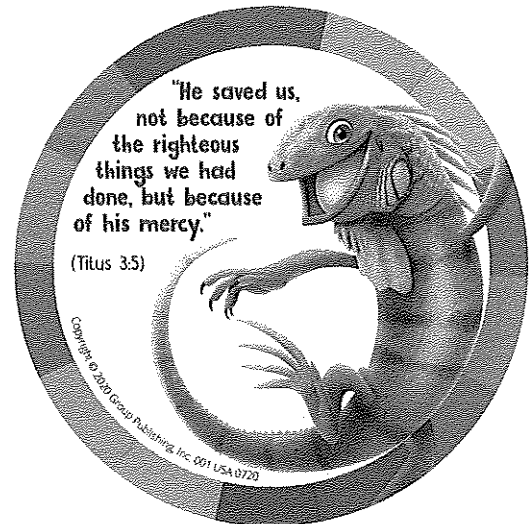
Jesus rescues us.

Purpose

It's unthinkable. You call 911 and no one comes. You need help, but it doesn't appear to be on the way. Do you lose hope?

Perhaps God's people's desperate prayers were just as earnest as they watched and waited for someone to save them from Roman rule. They may have pictured a mighty warrior like David or a miracle-working prophet like Elijah, but they probably weren't expecting a baby. And yet Jesus, the unexpected Savior, was precisely and graciously what the whole world needed most. You may not expect to teach this lesson outside of the month of December, but it's a story worth telling throughout the year.

Young kids ask for a lot of help. From jacket zipping to hand washing, children rely on grown-ups to save the day. Through this lesson, you'll point kids to Jesus—a baby who changed everything, a Rescuer who forgives, and a friend who's always there to help when we need it.



Prayer

Dear God, help me be a friend to the children in my care today. Show me ways I can help them grow to know and love you more. In Jesus' name, amen.

Prep

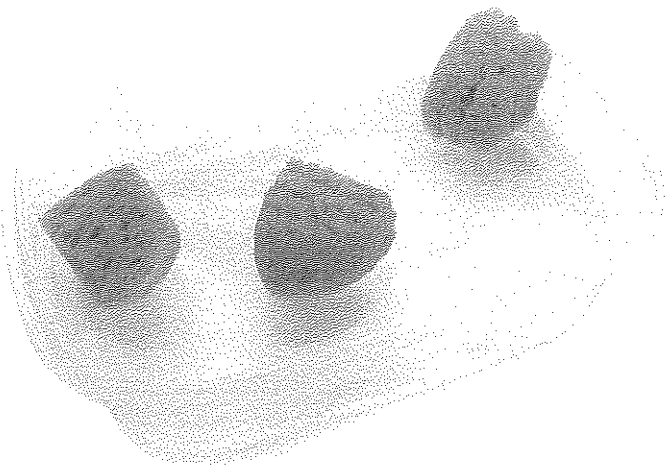
Opening Options	Sing & Play	Bible Discovery & Goodbye Circle	Apply-It Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Option Cards* <input type="checkbox"/> Sink or Float: waterproof containers, water, sponges in various sizes, paper <input type="checkbox"/> Build-a-Manger: building blocks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Music CD* <input type="checkbox"/> Music Video DVD* <input type="checkbox"/> Buddy Video DVD* <input type="checkbox"/> Guac Bible Memory Buddy poster* <input type="checkbox"/> media player <input type="checkbox"/> Bible (bookmark Titus 3:5) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> "Jesus Is Born" Bible Story poster* <input type="checkbox"/> Music CD* <input type="checkbox"/> Guac Bible Memory Buddy stickers* (1 per child) <input type="checkbox"/> media player <input type="checkbox"/> Bible (bookmark Luke 2:1, 6-7, 11-12, 17-18) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Game: small classroom object, Music CD*, media player <input type="checkbox"/> Food-n-Friendship: snack, napkins, hand cleanser, Music CD*, media player <input type="checkbox"/> Coloring Creation: "Jesus Is Born" Coloring Creation pages* (1 per child), crayons, small strips of yellow paper, glue sticks, Music CD*, media player

* in your **Simply Loved Kit**



Opening Options

Set up one—or both—of these intro activities to start your time together. Each activity connects kids to the Bible Point and to each other. Cut apart these Option Cards, and place one by each activity you choose. Crew Guides will follow the directions and build friendships with kids as they make discoveries together!



Sink or Float

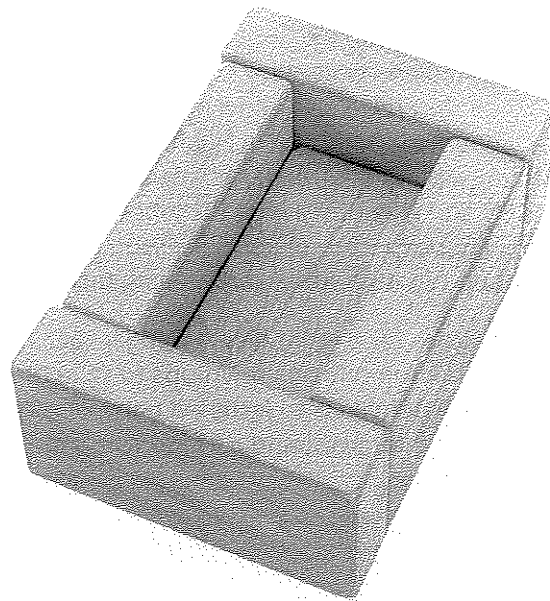
Supplies

- waterproof containers, water, sponges in various sizes, paper

Experiment with sponges and small pieces of paper to see if they sink or float. Can you get one to “sink”?

? Tell about a time you saw something float in water.

These sponges really like to float! Like lifeguards use things that float to rescue people, Jesus rescues us! Jesus loves us so much that he came to our world to be our forever friend.



Build-a-Manger

Supplies

- building blocks

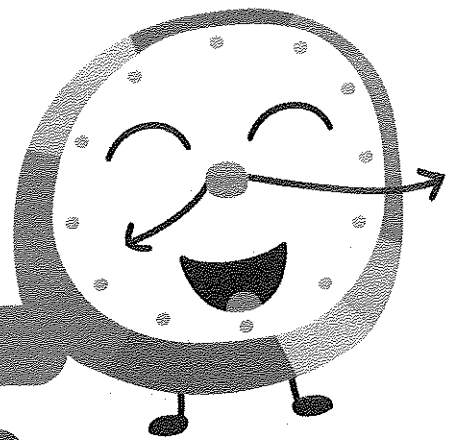
Build a manger—a place where outdoor animals eat—out of blocks. Then pretend to be cows and donkeys and eat imaginary hay from the manger.

? Tell about a time you helped feed an animal.

In today's Bible story, a manger became a crib for a very special baby. It was Jesus! Jesus rescues us.

Opening

Now's a great time for Opening Options. Choose one—or both—to introduce today's Bible discoveries.



 "The Cleanup Song" (Music CD track 1)

Help kids transition by cleaning up before sitting with their Connect Crews. A Connect Crew is a smaller group of kids with one Crew Guide.

Sing & Play

Welcome

Hello, friends! I'm so glad you're here today. Let's sing our welcome song.

 "Hello, My Friends" (Music CD track 2)

Let's say hello to our Crew Guides. They're our go-to friends who are here to have fun and learn along with us.

- Kids give their Crew Guides high-fives and low-fives.

Bible Point

Jesus rescues us. That's our Bible Point today. Every time you hear the words "Jesus rescues us," hold out your arms (demonstrate) and say, "Yay, Jesus!" Let's try that together.

Repeat the Bible Point several times, inviting kids to follow along.

Let's think about the word *rescue*. Do what I do!

- A lifeguard rescues people who need help in the water. (*pretend to swim*)
- An ambulance driver rescues people who are really sick and takes them to a hospital. (*make ambulance siren sounds*)
- Sometimes families rescue and help a pet who needs a loving home. (*pretend to pet a puppy*)

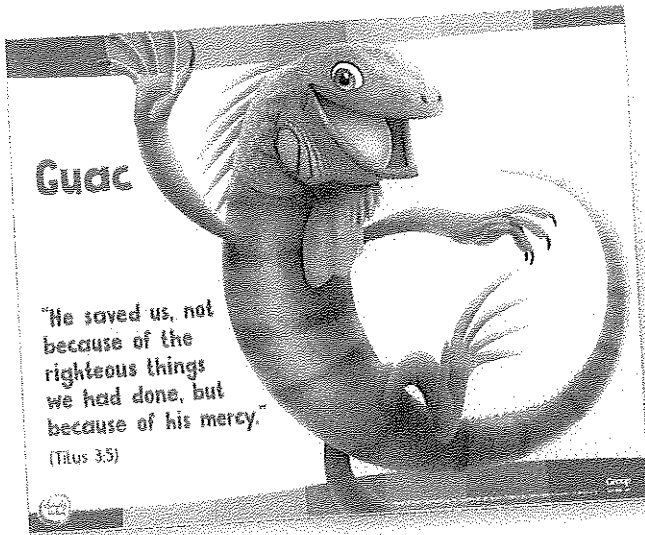
When you rescue, you help someone who really needs it. Jesus rescues us. (Yay, Jesus!) Do what I do!



Yay, Jesus!

Supplies

- Bible
- Music CD
 - "Hello, My Friends"
- Music Video DVD
 - "Rescue Me" music video
 - "Good in Every Way" music video
- Buddy Video DVD
 - Guac Bible Memory Buddy video (Week 1)
- media player
- Guac Bible Memory Buddy poster



Repetition cements learning, so be sure to say today's Bible Point A LOT. Have fun with it! Kids will love listening for it and responding with "Yay, Jesus!"

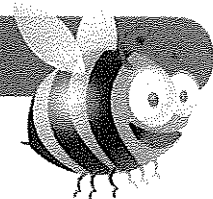
When we need a friend, never fear—Jesus is here! (place one arm over your chest)

When we need forgiveness, never fear—Jesus is here! (place the other arm over your chest)

When we need help making good choices, never fear, Jesus is here! (give yourself a hug)

Jesus rescues us. (Yay, Jesus!) Let's sing a song and ask Jesus to rescue us.

 "Rescue Me" music video



Bible Memory Buddy & Verse


It's time to talk to our friend Buzzly Bee. He helps us *beee* close friends with Jesus! Let's call for Buzzly. Do what I do!

- Flap hands quickly like a bee.
- Make buzzing sounds.

 Guac Bible Memory Buddy video (Week 1)

Guac is an iguana. An iguana is a big lizard. Guac reminds us of Jesus' big love for us. **Jesus rescues us!** (Yay, Jesus!)

- Show the Bible Memory Buddy poster.
- Have everyone wave at Guac.

 Show the Bible. The Bible is God's true story of love! Our Bible Memory Verse comes from the Bible. Let's say it together. I'll say a line, and then you repeat after me.

"He saved us, (extend arms out at your sides to form a cross) not because of the righteous things we had done, (shake head no) but because of his mercy." (give yourself a hug)
(Titus 3:5)

The word *righteous* means "right." Jesus rescues people, not because they are always right, but because he loves us and wants to help us. That's good news! Let's sing a song and tell Jesus that's he's good in every way.

 "Good in Every Way" music video

Bible Discovery

Hold up a Bible. Today our Bible story tells how people needed help. We need help sometimes, too. Let's talk about who you'd want to help or rescue you.

- 🗣️ **Who do you want to help you when you're sick?** Invite responses from the whole group.
- 🗣️ **Who do you want to help you when you're hungry?** Invite responses from the whole group.
- 🗣️ **Who do you want to help you when something you love is lost?** Invite responses from the whole group.

Well, God saw that the world needed help. Sin was hurting people, and God wanted to rescue people from sin so they could be his good friends. God sent someone to help. It wasn't a doctor or a lifeguard, and it wasn't even a grown-up. God sent a *baby* to rescue people from sin. God sent baby Jesus!

Jesus rescues us! (Yay, Jesus!) Do what I do!

- 👉 **Babies are little.** Pretend to hold a baby in your arms.
- 👉 **And they cry a lot.** Cry like a baby.

Babies spit up, need to have their diapers changed, and sleep a lot. But, surprise! God sent a special baby to help people who really needed a Rescuer.

- 👉 Have everyone throw their hands up in the air and say "Surprise!"

We usually read this Bible story at Christmas. But it's such a good story, it's worth telling over and over all throughout the year!

The story begins with God's people living regular lives.

- 👉 **They had houses.** Have everyone place their hands over their heads like a roof.
- 👉 **They had families.** Have everyone put an arm around a friend.
- 👉 **And they had jobs.** Have everyone pretend to hammer like carpenters.

But God's people lived in the Roman Empire, and the people in charge bossed them around and told them what to do. Let's talk in our Connect Crews.

- 👉 Have kids get cozy and sit in knee-to-knee circles with their Crews.
- 🗣️ **When have you seen someone be bossy and mean?** Invite Crew Guides to share first. They could talk about something they read, watched, or experienced personally.
- 👉 Crew Guides give thumbs-up when everyone has shared.

Supplies


- Bible
- "Jesus Is Born" Bible Story poster

We call helpers Crew Guides. If you lead a small class, you can be the Crew Guide. Simply gather kids in a cozy circle around you. If you have helpers, form smaller groups so each child can be known—and so kids can befriend your helpers, too!

God's people got bossed around by the Romans, and it wasn't fun. They hoped and hoped that God would send someone to rescue and free them from the Romans. Do this with me!

- Clasp your hands together and say, "Please help us!"
- Pause, with hands still clasped together, as if you're listening for a response.

It must have felt like God wasn't listening, because no one came to help them right away. But something else happened. Let's read and find out what it was.

 Read aloud Luke 2:1.

The Roman king decided to count all the people. He told everyone to go to the place they were born to be counted.

- Have everyone go to a different part of your room, then count them. Invite kids to count with you.


Now, there was a man named Joseph. He was God's friend. He was going to marry a girl named Mary. And, surprise!

- Have everyone throw their hands up in the air and say "Surprise!"

Mary was going to have a baby. Usually soon-to-be mommies and daddies stay home to rest and get ready for the baby. But the bossy Roman king said that Joseph and Mary had to go to Bethlehem. Do what I do!

- Pat your legs to show you're traveling.
- Using your imagination, have kids pretend to cross a desert, wade through a stream, and stop for a break.

Finally Joseph and Mary arrived in the little town of Bethlehem. Let's read what happened in there.

 Read aloud Luke 2:6-7.

Show the Bible Story poster. Surprise! Mary's baby was born.

- Have everyone throw their hands up in the air and say "Surprise!"
- **Who usually helps a mommy have a baby?** Invite responses from the whole group.

Doctors and nurses usually help, but in Bethlehem, there were no doctors or nurses or hospitals. God helped Mary have her baby. She wrapped the baby all nice and warm and laid him in a manger. A manger is something you find in a barn, where animals stay. It's like a wooden bowl for hay! But, surprise! That night it was a cradle for this very special baby.

- Have everyone throw their hands up in the air and say "Surprise!"
- Have kids pretend to hold a baby.
- Sing "Away in a Manger" with kids.

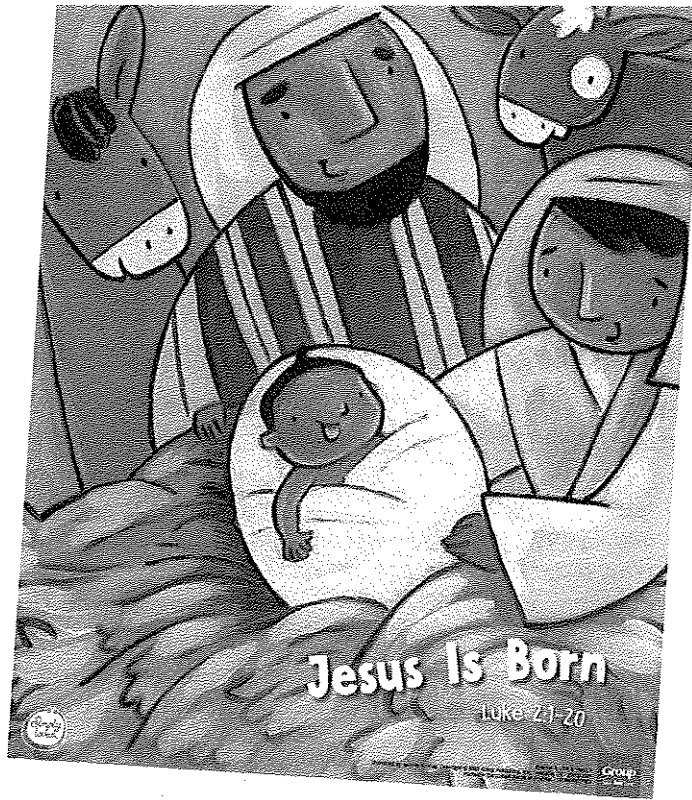
Then came another surprise!

- Have everyone throw their hands up in the air and say "Surprise!"




Read the verse from the Bible.

You're showing kids that God's Word is special. Don't worry—we've kept the verses short for young attention spans.




Later that night, angels surprised some shepherds and told them why the baby in the manger was so special.

 Read aloud Luke 2:11-12.

God sent baby Jesus to rescue and help people. God told the shepherds where to go to find him. The shepherds ran to find the special baby. Do what I do!

- Pat your legs quickly as if you're running.
- Shield your eyes with your hand as if you're looking for someone.
- Pretend to talk to baby Jesus in a quiet voice. Say things like, "Hi there, little friend." "You're so special." "We love you!"

The shepherds believed that God had heard his people asking for help. Let's read what the shepherds did after they met baby Jesus.

 Read aloud Luke 2:17-18.

The shepherds told everyone about baby Jesus. They believed he was the Savior, so they told people that Jesus, the Savior, was here. Maybe they shouted, "Jesus rescues us!" (*Yay, Jesus!*)

- Form two groups, and have groups stand across from each other on opposite sides of the room.
- Choose one side to be Shepherds. On "go," they'll all run to tell someone on the other side of the room "Jesus rescues us."
- Once they hear the good news, kids will respond, "Yay, Jesus!" Then the Shepherds will run back to the other side of the room again.
- Repeat, and have the other side be Shepherds who run to tell the good news.

Now's a great time for Apply-It Options. Choose one or more that fit your time frame to support today's Bible discoveries before the closing Goodbye Circle.

Apply-It Options

Choose one—or all—of these activities to support kids' learning after Bible Discovery.

Game

Supplies: small classroom object, *Music CD*, media player

Play a game like Hot Potato.

- Have kids sit in a circle and pass a classroom object around the circle as you play tracks 5, 6, and 7 on the CD.
- Randomly stop the music. The person holding the object when the music stops says the Bible Point: "**Jesus rescues us,**" and the other kids respond, "*Yay, Jesus!*"
- Resume music, and keep playing.

God's people didn't know who would come to help them or when it would happen. Then, surprise! Have everyone throw their hands up in the air and say "Surprise!" God sent Jesus as a baby. God loves us so much he sent Jesus to rescue and help us. **Jesus rescues us!** (*Yay, Jesus!*)



Food-n-Friendship

Supplies: snack, napkins, hand cleanser, *Music CD*, media player

- Give a napkin to a friend and say, "**Jesus rescues us!**" (*Yay, Jesus!*)



"God, You Are So Good"
(*Music CD track 3*)

- Eat snack together.
- When we pray, we talk with Jesus. Who has something we can talk with Jesus about?
- Pray together.

Jesus rescues us. (*Yay, Jesus!*)
Let's help each other clean up our snack.



Coloring Creation

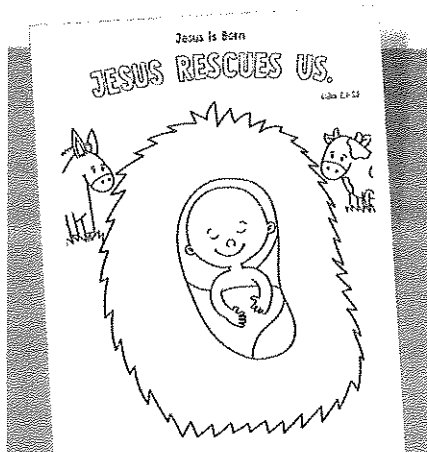
Supplies: "Jesus Is Born" Coloring Creation pages (1 per child), crayons, small strips of yellow paper, glue sticks, *Music CD*, media player

The angels told the shepherds about baby Jesus, and the shepherds found baby Jesus in a manger. Jesus was a special baby because he is God's Son. God knew we needed help, so he sent Jesus to earth as a baby. **Jesus rescues us.** (*Yay, Jesus!*)

- Point out the manger, and explain that it usually holds animal food, like hay.
- Color the picture.
- Glue the strips of yellow paper to the hay.
- Play music as kids create.



"His Mercy"
(*Titus 3:5a*)
(*Music CD track 7*)



Goodbye Circle

It's almost time to say goodbye! Let's sing our goodbye song as we join hands and make one big circle!



"Goodbye, My Friends" (Music CD track 4)

God knew people needed help, so he gave us baby Jesus. Jesus loves us and forgives us when we make wrong choices. We can always ask our friend Jesus for help because he's always with us. **Jesus rescues us.** (Yay, Jesus!)

- Show the Bible Memory Buddy poster, and remind kids that Guac helps us remember **Jesus rescues us.** (Yay, Jesus!)
- Invite Crew Guides to give each child a Guac sticker. Have kids stand away from their Crew Guides and take turns hurrying like shepherds toward their Crew Guides to receive a sticker.
- As Crew Guides give each child a sticker, have them say, "**Jesus rescues you,** [child's name]."

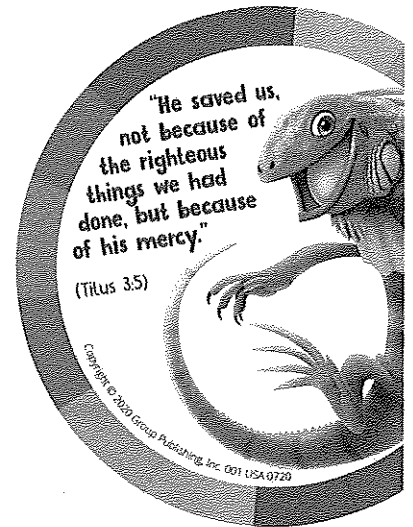


"His Mercy" (Titus 3:5a) (Music CD track 7)

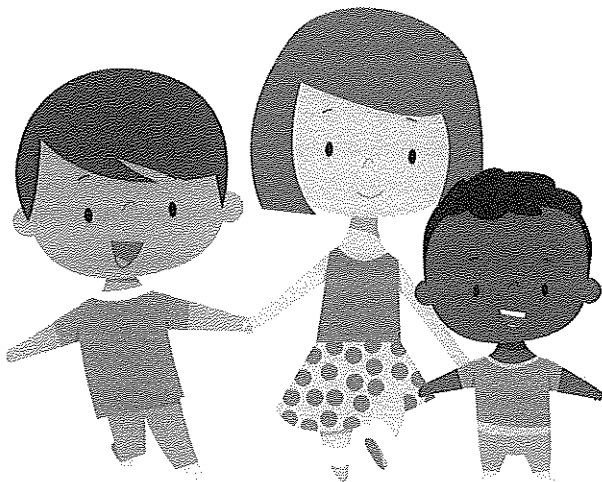
- Do Bible Memory Verse motions and move to the music!

Supplies

- Music CD
 - "Goodbye, My Friends"
 - "His Mercy" (Titus 3:5a)
- media player
- Guac Bible Memory Buddy stickers (1 per child)



Saying each child's name in a loving way helps kids simply experience God's love through you!





Jesus Is Born

JESUS RESCUES US.

Luke 2:1-20



“He saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy.”

(Titus 3:5)

GUAC

