WEEK 1
LESSON GUIDE



BIG IDEA

Jesus is the savior God promised.

BIBLE

An Angel Appears to Mary: Luke 1:26–38

ABOUT THIS WEEK

Some of our favorite gifts are things that were promised to us—a new baseball glove, a computer, or a special trip with our family. This week, we'll hear about how the angel Gabriel told Mary the joyful news that she will carry God's own son. When he was born, people realized just how special this gift would be—**Jesus is the savior God promised.**

WHAT? What are we talking about today?

WELCOME TIME

ACTIVITY | Jumping for Joy

- INSTRUCTIONS: *For this activity, provide gift sacks like these to use for a sack relay race between two teams.*
- I'm so excited because it's almost Christmas time, and Christmas brings us so much joy! Christmas carols, colorful cookies, time with friends and family, all the gifts... I can't wait! But Christmas is still a few weeks away, so we'll have to wait, and while we wait, let's have some fun.
- It's never too early to be jumping for joy for Christmas. Let's have a jumping for joy relay race!

SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?

STORY TIME

SCRIPTURE | Luke 1:26–38 (An Angel Appears to Mary)

- INSTRUCTIONS: *Teach this Scripture passage by reading from a preschool-friendly Bible translation, Bible storybook, or using the talking points provided below!*
- Welcome to the *Joy Story* corner! We'll learn all about why the birth of Jesus gives us so much joy.
- **Show your most joyful face!**
- You see, a long, long time ago, God made a promise. We know that God always says what is true. God made a promise to all of the earth to send a savior. A savior is someone who saves or rescues.
    - **So when God promises something, do you think it will come true?** Yes! God always keeps promises. Every. Single. Time!

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    - But sometimes, God's promises don't happen right away.
    - What is the longest you can wait for something you really want? One day? One hour? One minute?
- God's people waited hundreds of years for the savior to show up. Can you imagine waiting that long? But people did because they knew God always kept promises. So God's people waited and waited and waited. Until one day, God's promise came true!
- One day, an angel named Gabriel told Mary that she was going to have a baby—a baby boy named Jesus.
    - And this baby would not be like any other baby born before. This baby would be the Son of God, the savior that God had promised a long time ago!
    - What would you have said if you heard the angel's message?
- Mary asked simply, "How can this happen?" She wasn't sure that God picked the right person.
    - But God had a plan. Jesus would be born through Mary, and he would grow up just like any other kid!
    - And at the right time, he would show himself to be the savior everyone had been waiting for.
- This is the beginning of the Christmas story—and it all began with a promise from God that came true. What a *Joy Story!*

BIG IDEA | Jesus is the savior God promised.

- INSTRUCTIONS: *Introduce today's Big Idea using the following hand motions:*
- What's the Big Idea of today's *Joy Story?*
    - Jesus is *("Jesus" in ASL)*
      the Savior *("Savior" in ASL)*
      God *(Point up.)*
      promised *(Link pinky fingers together.)*

VIDEO | Teaching Video (Week 1)

- INSTRUCTIONS: *Play this week's episode of Cali's World.* (https://vimeo.com/942505958/580194d61e) *If you're short on time, show the illustrated Bible story video. (https://vimeo.com/996205985/742b01aa9b)*

PRAYER

- Dear God, thank you for sending Jesus. He is the savior you promised, and he is our savior, too. Amen.

NOW WHAT? What does God want us to do about it?

ACTIVITY | Circle Time

- INSTRUCTIONS: *Sit in a circle and have kids take turns answering the following questions:*
- Who gave God's message to Mary? An angel named Gabriel.
- God promised Mary that she would have a...? Baby.
- What did God promise the people a long, long time ago? A savior.
- Who is the savior? Jesus!
- Let's say our Big Idea together: Jesus is the savior God promised.

MEMORY VERSE | Luke 1:46–47 (NIV)

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- INSTRUCTIONS: *Help kids learn this month's memory verse by setting the words (and the Scripture reference) to the tune of "We Wish You A Merry Christmas." You can also have kids repeat the verse after you in small chunks, say them using silly voices, or create simple hand motions for keywords.*
- "My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior."

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