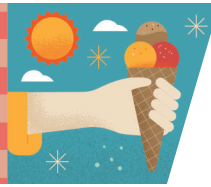




COOKOUT

It's worth the wait



WEEK
FOUR
APRIL 2024

SMALL GROUP
2-3

TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

I'm with You

Simeon Waits for the Messiah
Luke 2:25-35

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

God is with you while you wait.

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

"Wait for the Lord. Be strong
and don't lose hope. Wait
for the Lord."

Psalm 27:14, NIV

MONTHLY VIRTUE

Patience—Waiting until later
for what you want now

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

PRELUDE: Setting the tone for the experience

See the **Getting Ready** pages at the end of this document for a detailed description of what you'll need for today.

In the **Prelude** folder of your curriculum, you'll find a variety of other resources to help you prepare.

Check out our Pinterest page here <https://bit.ly/447HSZi> for a visual on some of the activities.

SMALL GROUP

15
MIN

SOCIAL: Providing time for fun interaction

Early Arriver
Opening Activity

LARGE GROUP

35
MIN

STORY: Communicating God's truth in engaging ways

WORSHIP: Inviting people to respond to God

Welcome/Opener
Worship
Bible Story
Bottom Line
Prayer
Closer

SMALL GROUP

25
MIN

GROUPS: Creating a safe place to connect

Bible Story Review: Waiting on a Hero
Application Activity: While I'm Waiting
Memory Verse Activity: God Is With Me
Prayer Activity: Pray and Dismiss

HOME: Prompting action beyond the experience

Parent Cue Card (print or email)
Devotionals for Kids
Parent Cue App



COOKOUT

It's worth the wait



WEEK
FOUR
APRIL 2024

SMALL GROUP
2-3

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION
15 MINUTES

MADE TO CONNECT

an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding



Before kids arrive, take a few moments to pray for them. Pray for those who might be visiting your group for the first time. Reflect on God's perfect timing in fulfilling the promise to send a Savior and how God's fulfillment of that promise gives you hope as you wait on other things in your life. Ask God to help the kids in your group experience gifts of patience, peace, and joy as they wait for things in their own lives.

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

I'm with You

Simeon Waits for the Messiah
Luke 2:25-35

1. EARLY ARRIVER

WHAT YOU NEED: Offering container and playdough

WHAT YOU DO:

- Welcome kids by name as they arrive.
- Invite kids who have brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
- Once enough kids have gathered, ask: "If you were going to a cookout and there could only be one food, what would it be?"
- Give each kid a lump of playdough.
- Instruct each kid to make their food using playdough.
 - *NOTE: Be sure to accept and encourage a variety of food examples that represent the cultural variety represented by your group or local area.*
- Invite kids to share their cookout creation with the group!

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

God is with you while you wait.

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

"Wait for the Lord. Be strong and don't lose hope. Wait for the Lord."

Psalm 27:14, NIV

MONTHLY VIRTUE

Patience—Waiting until later for what you want now

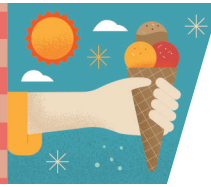
BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.



COOKOUT

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WEEK
FOUR
APRIL 2024

SMALL GROUP
2-3

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION
15 MINUTES

MADE TO PLAY

an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group



2. OPENING ACTIVITY

WHAT YOU NEED: No supplies needed

WHAT YOU DO:

- Divide kids into teams of 3-4.
- Say: "I want you to imagine you're waiting in the world's longest line for food at your neighborhood cookout."
- Instruct the kids to come up with a game to play while they are waiting.
 - Provide some examples, but encourage creativity: Simon Says, I Spy, the alphabet game, etc.
- Encourage teams to work together to agree on a game to play or make up.
- Give each team time to play a few rounds of their chosen game.

WHAT YOU SAY:

"Waiting isn't so bad when you can turn your focus from waiting to having fun, right? Can each team share what game you chose? (*Invite responses.*)
[Transition] Today in Large Group we're going to hear about something else you can focus on while you're waiting."

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

I'm with You

Simeon Waits for the Messiah
Luke 2:25-35

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

God is with you while you wait.

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

**"Wait for the Lord. Be strong
and don't lose hope. Wait
for the Lord."**

Psalm 27:14, NIV

MONTHLY VIRTUE

**Patience—Waiting until later
for what you want now**

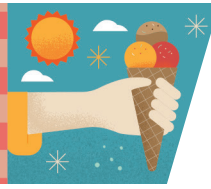
BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.



COOKOUT

It's worth the wait



WEEK
FOUR
APRIL 2024

SMALL GROUP

2-3

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO MOVE

an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body



TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

I'm with You

Simeon Waits for the Messiah
Luke 2:25-35

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

God is with you while you wait.

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

**"Wait for the Lord. Be strong
and don't lose hope. Wait
for the Lord."**
Psalm 27:14, NIV

MONTHLY VIRTUE

Patience—Waiting until later
for what you want now

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

1. WAITING ON A HERO

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

WHAT YOU NEED: Bandanas (or scarves), ribbons, scissors, and timer (stopwatch or smartphone)

WHAT YOU DO:

- Size a piece of ribbon around each kid's waist, cut it, and instruct them to tie it securely around their waist.
- Give each kid a bandana.
- Instruct each kid to tuck a corner of their bandana into their ribbon waistband near their side so the majority of the bandana is hanging out near their hip.
 - *Check that all kids' bandanas are hanging on their side versus the front or back area.*
- Assign one kid to be the "tagger" and one kid to be the "hero."
- Give the "hero" extra bandanas.
- Set the timer for one minute.
- When you say "Go," start the timer, and direct the kids to quickly walk around the area attempting to avoid the "tagger."
- Instruct the "tagger" to attempt to remove kids' bandanas during the one minute.
- Direct the hero to look for kids whose bandana has been removed, and give those kids another one.
- When the time ends, say "freeze."
- Ask the kids without flags at the end of the round a review question from the questions below.
- If all kids have their flags, ask the tagger a review question from the questions below.
- Play several rounds.
- Reassign roles each round so as many kids as possible have had a turn to be a tagger or hero.
- Continue playing until all questions have been answered and as time and interest allow.

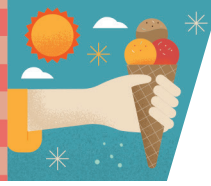
Review Questions:

1. What were God's people, the Israelites, waiting for hundreds of years for? (*God's Rescuer*)
2. Who was our story today about? (*Simeon*)
3. What did God's Spirit tell Simeon? (*that he would meet the promised Savior before he died*)
4. Did Simeon receive his promise right away? (*no*)
5. Do we know how long Simeon had to wait? (*We don't know the exact amount of time, but we do know it did not happen right away.*)
6. How did Simeon respond during his waiting? (*joyfully, patiently trusting God's promise*)



COOKOUT

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2-3

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

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GROUPS

HOME

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

7. What did God's Spirit prompt Simeon to do one day? (*Go to the temple courtyard.*)
8. What did Simeon find at the temple? (*Baby Jesus, the Messiah*)
9. Why was Baby Jesus at the temple? (*Mary and Joseph brought Him to dedicate Him to God.*)
10. What can we learn from Simeon's waiting? (*Answers may vary. God is with you while you wait. You can continue to serve God and find joy even while you're waiting. You can trust God's promises.*)

WHAT YOU SAY:

"One of my favorite things about a family cookout are the games we play, like capture the flag. During our game, it was easy to lose a bandana to the tagger. In our lives, it can be easy for us to lose hope while we're waiting. Waiting can be hard, especially when we don't know how long we'll be waiting. But, in our story today, Simeon showed us what it looks like to not lose hope while we wait.

"Through his many years of waiting, Simeon was patient, with joy—trusting in God's promise. And when the time was right, God sent Jesus to be our Savior. And Simeon was able to hold Jesus in his arms, just as God's Spirit had promised. Our story not only reminds us that **God is with you while you wait**, but also shows us that we can be wise with the time we have while waiting. Simeon continued to serve God and grow in faith and knowledge."

[Make It Personal] (Share an age-appropriate story about a time you were waiting on something, and chose to have joy and patience while waiting.)



COOKOUT

It's worth the wait



WEEK
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APRIL 2024

SMALL GROUP
2-3

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO CREATE

an activity that explores spiritual ideas through the process of drawing, building, and designing



*2. WHILE I'M WAITING

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: "While I'm Waiting" Activity Page; rice; funnel; empty water bottles; small items—buttons, paper clips, pom-poms, googly eyes, feathers; ribbon; hole punch; and scissors; *Optional: packaging tape*

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

I'm with You

Simeon Waits for the Messiah
Luke 2:25-35

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

God is with you while you wait.

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

"Wait for the Lord. Be strong and don't lose hope. Wait for the Lord."

Psalm 27:14, NIV

MONTHLY VIRTUE

Patience—Waiting until later for what you want now

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

WHAT YOU DO:

- Give each kid an empty bottle and one of each of the five small objects.
- Ask kids to place the objects inside their bottle.
- Help each kid funnel rice in their bottle, leaving three inches from the top.
- Demonstrate to the kids how to secure the cap on their bottle.
 - *Optional: If you're not doing the Memory Verse Activity, help kids secure the cap with packaging tape.*
- Set out the scissors and the hole punch for kids to share.
- Give each kid a card from the "While I'm Waiting" Activity Page.
- Instruct each kid to punch a hole in the top of their card from the "While I'm Waiting" Activity Page.
- Help kids cut a piece of ribbon to loop through the card and tie it around their bottle.
- Invite kids to read on their cards how each item helps them remember God's truths while they are waiting.
- Instruct the kids to hang on to their water bottles for the Memory Verse Activity.

WHAT YOU SAY:

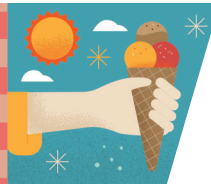
"Waiting well is hard. But, remember that you don't have to do it on your own! When we follow Jesus, God sends the Holy Spirit to help us. Patience is a gift from God.

"This week, if you find yourself becoming impatient, use your bottle to remind you what God is like. We can use our waiting time to show others what God is like by loving others and having a good attitude. As you look at all the items inside your water bottle, remember **God is with you while you wait.**"



COOKOUT

It's worth the wait



WEEK
FOUR
APRIL 2024

SMALL GROUP
2-3

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO EXPLORE

an activity that extends learning through hands on experimentation and discovery



3. GOD IS WITH ME

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: Bibles, prepared water bottles from While I'm Waiting activity, letter beads, and tacky glue or packaging tape; *Optional: paper and pens*

WHAT YOU DO:

- Give every 2-3 kids a Bible to share.
- Lead them to look up the Memory Verse using the Bible Navigation Tips below.

***Finding verses with 2nd and 3rd graders:** Guide them to open their Bibles to the front and find the table of contents. (Hold up a Bible opened to the table of contents to show the kids what the page looks like.) When the kids find the table of contents, lead them to find Psalms in the list under "Old Testament." When the kids find Psalms, lead them to look at the page number beside the word. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find Psalms. Help the kids find the page. When they find Psalms, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find chapter 27. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find verse 14 in chapter 27.*

- Invite a few kids to read the verse aloud.
- Recite the Memory Verse a few times together.
- Set out the beads.
- Instruct kids to find one of each of the following letters: W, F, T, and L.
 - Explain these letters will remind them of the verse: Wait for the Lord.
- Instruct kids to place their beads inside their bottles and secure the lid back on top.
- Help kids put tacky glue around the lids of their bottles so they're extra secure (and/or secure with packaging tape).
- Invite kids to shake their bottles up and try to find the beads in order of the Memory Verse: W, F, T, L. (Wait for the Lord.)

NOTE: If you did not choose to do the While I'm Waiting activity, challenge teams of kids to write out as much of the Memory Verse as possible using letter beads. Instruct the teams to arrange the letters on paper and fill in the rest with a pen. See which team can finish first.

WHAT YOU SAY:

"Our Memory Verse tells us to wait for the Lord. But, what does this actually look like? (Invite responses. Prompt kids with examples if needed.)

"If you are waiting for ice cream to be served, you can show people what Jesus is like by being grateful instead of grumbling. If you moved to a new city and haven't found friends yet, you can trust that God is going to provide for you. This week, I want you to use your bottles to remind you that **God is with you while you wait** no matter what you are waiting through."

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

I'm with You

Simeon Waits for the Messiah
Luke 2:25-35

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

God is with you while you wait.

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

"Wait for the Lord. Be strong and don't lose hope. Wait for the Lord."

Psalm 27:14, NIV

MONTHLY VIRTUE

Patience—Waiting until later for what you want now

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.



COOKOUT

It's worth the wait



WEEK
FOUR
APRIL 2024

SMALL GROUP
2-3

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO REFLECT

an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application



4. PRAY AND DISMISS [PRAY TO GOD | PRAYER ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: No supplies needed

WHAT YOU DO:

- One by one, invite the kids in the group to share anything they are waiting for or times they have felt impatient before.
- After each kid shares, instruct the group to say: **"God is with you while you wait."**
- Close your group time in prayer.

WHAT YOU SAY:

"God, thank You that You don't leave us in the waiting. No matter how long we have to wait and no matter what we're waiting for, You have promised that everything will be made right in the end for those who follow Jesus. Please work through Your Holy Spirit in us to help us this week to wait with hope. May we trust and believe that **God is with you while you wait.** We love You and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

As adults arrive to pick up, ask kids to show off their While I'm Waiting bottles and ask them what the W, F, T and L beads mean. Encourage them to remember that God is with them while they wait this week!

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

I'm with You

Simeon Waits for the Messiah
Luke 2:25-35

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

God is with you while you wait.

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

"Wait for the Lord. Be strong and don't lose hope. Wait for the Lord."

Psalm 27:14, NIV

MONTHLY VIRTUE

Patience—Waiting until later for what you want now

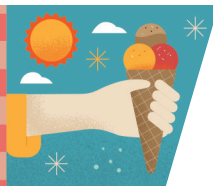
BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.



COOKOUT

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WEEK
FOUR
APRIL 2024

SMALL GROUP

2-3

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

GETTING READY

HERE'S EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW TO GET READY FOR THIS WEEK

SOCIAL: PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION (15 MINUTES)

Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Get ready to experience today's story.

(Choose one or both of these activities.)

1. EARLY ARRIVER

Made to Connect: an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Offering container
- Playdough, a small lump for each kid

2. OPENING ACTIVITY

Made to Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

WHAT YOU NEED:

- No supplies needed

GROUPS: CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT (25 MINUTES)

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible story applies to real life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

(Choose as many of these activities as you like.)

** If you don't have time to do all these activities, be sure to do activity #2.*

1. WAITING ON A HERO

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

Made to Move: an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Bandanas (or scarves), one for each kid
- Ribbon, one large spool for each Small Group
- Scissors, one pair for each Small Group
- Timer (stopwatch or smart phone), one for each Small Group

* 2. WHILE I'M WAITING

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

Made to Create: an activity that explores spiritual ideas through the process of drawing, building, and designing

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Print "While I'm Waiting" Activity Page on paper and cut apart, one card for each kid
- Rice, about three cups for each kid
- Funnel, one for each Small Group
- Empty water bottles (collected during Weeks 1-3), one for each kid
- Ribbon, one roll for each Small Group
- Hole punch, two for each Small Group
- Scissors, several pairs for a Small Group to share
- Small items
 - Buttons, one for each kid
 - Paper clips, one for each kid
 - Craft pom-poms, one for each kid
 - Googly eyes, one for each kid
 - Feathers, one for each kid
- *Optional: packaging tape*

3. GOD IS WITH ME

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

Made to Explore: an activity that extends learning through hands-on experimentation and discovery

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Bibles, one for every 2-3 kids
- Prepared bottles from While I'm Waiting activity
- Letter beads (large assortment that includes W, F, T, and L), one of each letter for every kid
- Tacky glue (or packaging tape), enough for kids to share
- *Optional: paper and pens, 3-4 for each Small Group*

4. PRAY AND DISMISS

[PRAY TO GOD | PRAYER ACTIVITY]

Made to Reflect: an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application

WHAT YOU NEED:

- No supplies needed



COOKOUT

It's worth the wait



WEEK
FOUR
APRIL 2024

SMALL GROUP

2-3

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

GETTING READY

HERE'S EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW TO GET READY FOR THIS WEEK

HOME: PROMPTING ACTION BEYOND THE EXPERIENCE

- Print on cardstock or email this week's devotionals and Parent Cue cards.
- Tell parents about our additional family resource:
Parent Cue app.