



Tips for Three-year-olds

- They live very much in the world of today. Promises for tomorrow may hold little meaning for them. It is possible that their uncertainty will be expressed through actions rather than words.
- During the opening and closing rituals, use caution with candles. You may want to choose an electric or battery powered light.

Reshape, Reclaim, Remember

Isaiah 64:1–9

A supplemental resource to adapt sessions for groups consisting mostly of three-year-olds.

God Is Very Near

(based on Isaiah 64:1–9)

(Invite the children to listen for the phrase “watch, wait, hope” in the story; whenever they hear it, have them join you in whispering, “God is very near.”)

Long ago there was a man named Isaiah. Isaiah was like God’s messenger. God spoke to Isaiah. Then, Isaiah would talk to the people. Isaiah said to the people, “watch, wait, hope.” (*God is very near.*)

But the people were very frightened and sad. They lived in scary times. The people around them were hurting each other. The people began to think that God didn’t love them anymore. Isaiah said to the people, “watch, wait, hope.” (*God is very near.*)

“Don’t give up hope,” Isaiah said to the people. “God loves you. God is with you.” And again Isaiah said, “watch, wait, hope.” (*God is very near.*)

“But what shall we do while we wait?” the people asked Isaiah. “Keep on loving God. Worship God always. Love and care for other people.” Then Isaiah said again, “watch, wait, hope.” (*God is very near.*)

The people thought, “Soon we will feel better. God loves us, God cares for us.” And so the people listened to Isaiah’s message. They waited and hoped for peace. They waited and hoped for the time when they would feel happy again. And always, always, they remembered what Isaiah said, “watch, wait, hope.” (*God is very near.*)

Optional activity after the story

Circle game “God Is Near”

(tune: “Farmer in the Dell”)

Form a circle and invite one child to stand in the middle. Walk in a circle as you sing. Continue until all children have been invited into the circle. If there are not enough children to form a circle, invite children to clap and each child take a turn to stand as the song is sung.

God is always near.

God is always here.

God’s love is here to be with *(child’s name)*.

(Child moves into the circle.)

God is always near.

Respond

Use these ideas to adapt the Respond activities on page 6.

- ❑ **Body messages:** This activity would need several helpers, particularly if the children are using paint; they might need help drawing their facial features. Hold up the tracings before you roll them into a tube so they can see how tall they are.
- ❑ **Bell messengers:** Using small plastic flower pots which won’t break might be easier with young children.
- ❑ **Advent calendar:** Although the illustration shows the paper cutout faces glued around the edges of the calendar, it will be easier for this age group to randomly glue the faces around the manger.



Tips for Three-year-olds

- Their comfort and familiarity is expanding from a few known places to include home, school, church, playgroups, and perhaps even sports venues.
- They have compassionate hearts and although their use of words is still devel-

oping they will express with their body language how deeply they care. We can help them grow a sense of empathy for others and teach them the words to use as they reach out to the world around them.

Remind, Reveal, Reinforce

Isaiah 40:1–11

A supplemental resource to adapt sessions for groups consisting mostly of three-year-olds.

God Is Here

(based on Isaiah 40:1–11)

(Practice the words in bold type and the actions with the children before telling the story.)

Long, long ago the people were tired and sad. The people called to God for help and comfort.

And God said, "I love you. I will care for you."

God is here! Hooray for God! (**Smile, wave hands high.**)

God sent a helper to go with the people to find a new home. But the people felt lost. They called to God for help and comfort.

And God said, "I love you. I will care for you."

God is here! Hooray for God! (**Smile, wave hands high.**)

The people walked and walked and walked. They walked for a long, long time! Would they ever get to their new home? They called to God for help and comfort.

And God said, "I love you. I will care for you."

God is here! Hooray for God! (**Smile, wave hands high.**)

When we feel sad and lost God helps and comforts us, too. God loves us and will care for us – forever.

God is here! Hooray for God! (**Smile, wave hands high.**)

Optional activity after the story

Game Sit in a circle and give each child a feather. Demonstrate how to gently blow on the feather to make it float in the air. Suggest that each time their feathers float down and touch them, they could say, "God loves me!"

Sing "God Is With Us"

(tune: "Frère Jacques" or "Are You Sleeping?")

God is with us, God is with us,
all the time, all the time.

God will always love us.

God will always love us.

Thank you, God. Thank you, God.

Respond

Use these ideas to adapt the Respond activities on page 12.

- ❑ **Comfort messages:** Give two messages each to the children – one they could keep for themselves and another message they could give to someone else. (They will probably want to decorate only one of the messages.)
- ❑ **Comfort snacks:** Instead of using tomato sauce for the facial features, provide raisins, cucumber circles, and celery pieces to create the faces on the cheese slices.



Tips for Three-year-olds

- Three year olds are willing and able to express emotion in most everything they see, hear, taste, and touch. And they are not shy about expressing a full range of emotions, regardless of where they may be.
- Their vocabularies are expanding and there may also be a growing awareness of the effect they can have on the world and the people around. Young children may quickly repeat an action or words which generate a laugh or reaction from others.

Refocus, Restore, Rejoice

Psalm 126

A supplemental resource to adapt sessions for groups consisting mostly of three-year-olds.

God Loves Us

(based on Psalm 126)

(Invite children to make a fist and move their arms towards their bodies as they repeat after you, "Yes!"; and

to hug self when saying, "God loves us!")

Long, long ago God called the people to come back home.

Yes!

"Welcome home!" said God.

God loves us!

The mothers and fathers danced. The aunts and uncles sang. The boys and girls laughed and played.

Yes!

"Welcome home!" said God.

God loves us!

The grandmothers and grandfathers called out.

"Look what God has done for us!"

Yes!

"Welcome home!" said God.

God loves us!

Everyone shouted for joy.

Yes!

"Welcome home!" said God.

God loves us!

Optional activity after the story

Sing "Do You See?"

(tune: "Muffin Man")

Do you see the stars that shine, *(wiggle fingers)*
the stars that shine, the stars that shine?

Do you see the stars that shine
way up in the sky?

Do you feel God's love around, *(hug self)*
all around, all around?

Do you feel God's love around,
around each one of us?

Respond

Use these ideas to adapt the Respond activities on page 18.

Shakers: Three year olds may need more help assembling the materials to make the shakers.

Sharing songs: The children may suddenly feel shy when faced with a microphone or tape machine. You may want to record the children as they sing with Priscilla or when they sing after the story.



Tips for Three-year-olds

- Young children are active participants in their learning, wanting to see, hear, taste, and touch as they explore their world.
- There is much for them to wonder at and celebrate as they hear and respond to the

story of Jesus' birth, one which will probably become a favourite over the years.

- In today's session try and provide a much needed pause in all the excitement which surrounds children at this time.

Reflect, Resist, Re-Imagine

Luke 1:26–38

A supplemental resource to adapt sessions for groups consisting mostly of three-year-olds.

Welcome, Baby Jesus

(based on Luke 1:26–38 and Luke 2:1–20)

(Invite children to repeat the italicized words or sounds after each section of the story.)

One day God sent an angel to Mary. The angel said, "Mary, you are going to have a baby. The baby's name will be Jesus." Mary and Joseph said, "We will take care of this baby. Thank you God." (*Thank you, God.*)

Mary and Joseph had to go on a long trip. Mary sat on a donkey's back. Joseph led the way. It was a lo-o-ong way. (*clippity clop, clippity clop, clippity clop*)

Finally they got to Bethlehem. There were so many people! They must find a place to sleep. (*knock, knock, knock*)

Finally they found a place. It was warm and cozy. There was lots of hay. Joseph made a bed in the hay. They closed their eyes and went to sleep. (*zzzz-zzzz-zzzz*)

Then it was time for Jesus to be born. Welcome, baby Jesus! (*Welcome, baby Jesus!*)

Out on the hills, some shepherds watched their sheep. An angel sang to them. "A special baby has been born. Go to Bethlehem and see this baby who is sleeping in some hay!" Then more and more angels came and sang. The sky was filled with happy songs! (*la la la la*)

The shepherds came to see the baby. The shepherds knelt down. They peeked at the little baby and said, "Welcome, baby Jesus." Then the shepherds said, "Thank you, God." (*Thank you, God.*)

Mary and Joseph said "thank you" too. They felt God's love inside them and all around them. They knew it was a special time. (*whisper: "Welcome, baby Jesus."*)

Optional activity after the story

Chant "Little Baby"

(Invite children to repeat each line after you.)

Little baby, oh so small,
what can I do for you?
Little baby, oh so small,
I'll sing a song for you.

Little baby, oh so small,
what can I do for you?

Little baby, oh so small,
I'll rock my arms for you.

Little baby, oh so small,
what can I do for you?
Little baby, oh so small,
I will watch over you.

Respond

Use these ideas to adapt the Respond activities on page 24.

- ❑ **Ornaments:** Prepare used CDs by taping together ahead of time, with the ribbon hanger attached inside. Help children choose nativity pictures and roll pieces of tape for them to attach these to the CDs.

- ❑ **Sock doll:** Prepare circles with facial features already drawn on. After the children have added stuffing to the sock help them glue on the circles and add the elastic bands.



**Reaffirm, Redeem,
Rename**
Luke 2:22–40

A supplemental resource to adapt sessions for groups consisting mostly of three-year-olds.

Tips for Three-year-olds

- Three year olds often love to get close to a baby. They will gently touch, lean in for a kiss, and ask lots of questions. They may offer advice to adult caregivers about food, clothes, toys and games, and even names. Sometimes, elders in the church act the same way with babies.
- In today's session, the children will have an

opportunity to be both "older" and "younger" as they hold their "babies" in the story and welcome elders and visitors.

- This opportunity to sit, talk, and create with elders may be something that is missing in other areas of their lives and can bring much joy and excitement.

Jesus Is Presented at the Temple

(based on Luke 2:22–40)

(Hand out a baby Jesus to each child. Hum a lullaby while children rock their babies.)

Shhh (*whisper*), baby Jesus is sleeping. Mary and Joseph took baby Jesus to the temple, which is like a church, for a special blessing. They wanted to thank God for their precious baby. While they were there, something surprising happened! (*Pause while children continue to rock their babies so they won't wake up.*)

A very old man named Simeon lived there. (*Show Simeon.*) Simeon had been waiting a very long time to see a special child of God. When Simeon saw baby Jesus, he knew that *this* was the special baby he had been waiting for. Simeon was so happy and so full of love, he began to sing:

Thank you, God!
I am so happy.
Jesus will be special to all people.
With my eyes, I've seen the love
God wants to give to everyone.

(Remind children not to let their babies wake up. They might hum a familiar tune while they rock.)

Anna, a very old woman was also there. (*Show Anna.*) Just like Simeon, Anna had been waiting a very long time to see a special child of God, too. So when Anna saw baby Jesus, she knew that *this* was the special baby she had been waiting for.

"Yes! Yes!" she whispered, "This is a special child of God. This is the one we have been waiting for!"

Then Anna ran through the temple telling everyone the good news! The baby they had been waiting for – a special baby come to help them all – was born at last.

(Rock babies some more. They might want to give their babies gentle kisses.)

That night, when Mary and Joseph got back home, they had a lot to think about. They didn't understand everything that had happened, but they knew God was with them. They saw how Anna and Simeon had loved baby Jesus, and had known he was special. Soon everyone would know!

(Gently help the children find places to lay their babies and cover them with blankets.)

Optional activity after the story

"Sing a Song!" (*tune: "Frère Jacques" or "Are You Sleeping?"*)

Sing a song! Sing a song! (*shake arms in air*)
Sing out loud! Sing out loud! (*wiggle hips*)
Jesus came to show us, (*make glasses with index finger and thumb and hold up to eyes*)
Jesus came to show us, (*repeat action*)

God is love. (*spread arms wide and bring into a hug position across chest*)

God is love. (*repeat action*)

Little baby, oh so small,
I will watch over you.

Respond

Use these ideas to adapt the Respond activities on page 30.

- ❑ **Christ candle:** Help children decorate tubes, or have some partially decorated ahead of time. Prepare tissue paper flames ahead of time. Print "Jesus came to show us love" around the edges of the plate ahead of time.

- ❑ **Activity sheet:** Tape a paper flap over each picture ahead of time, to create a curtain. As the children lift up each flap, they call out "Jesus shows us love!" Then, lift up the last flap to reveal baby Jesus.



Tips for Three-year-olds

- Three year olds are just beginning to learn about living in God's way.
- They are concrete thinkers and will not yet understand the metaphor of Jesus as "light." They will, however, be fascinated by the candle, and understand the warmth and light it gives.

Recognize, Re-engage, Respond John 1:(1-9), 10-18

A supplemental resource to adapt sessions for groups consisting mostly of three-year-olds.

Light for the People

(based on John 1:(1-9), 10-18)

A long long time ago, before there were any people, or animals, or night or day, God was all alone. God looked around and there was nothing to see. But God knew what to do. God spoke quietly into the nothing and made everything!

God spoke and there was sky! God spoke and there was land and water. God spoke and the sun, moon, and all the stars began to shine.

And then God created people. People who could think and feel and care for this wonderful new world. This bright new world full of life and light.

But soon the people forgot about God. They forgot about God's love and about how to take care of this beautiful world. And their children and their grandchildren couldn't remember either. Their hearts grew cold and sad. They wanted to know about God again.

Then, one day, God sent a man named John to help the people.

"Bring me all your lights," John said. And so the people brought all their lights and put them in front of John. *(Have the children gather and bring the candles.)*

John lit the first light. *(Light one of the candles.)* "I'll tell you about Jesus," he said. "When you know about Jesus you will also know about God."

John lit a second light. *(Light another candle.)* "Jesus loves everyone."

John lit a third light. *(Light another candle.)* "Jesus show how Gods wants us to live."

John lit a fourth light. *(Light another candle.)* "Jesus shows everyone how to be loving, caring people."

John lit the rest of the candles. *(Light all the candles.)* "When we know about Jesus' love shining in the world, we know about God too. Look at all that light!"

The people watched the light for a very long time. They could see how the light was making everything glow. They wanted to know God's love. They wanted the love light to shine in them too. *(If using real candles, use the candlesnuffer to extinguish all the candles.)*

Optional activity after the story

"Sing a Song!" (tune: "Frère Jacques" or "Are You Sleeping?")

Sing a song! Sing a song! *(shake arms in air)*

Sing out loud! Sing out loud! *(wiggle hips)*

Jesus came to show us, *(make glasses with index finger and thumb and hold up to eyes)*

Jesus came to show us, *(repeat action)*

God is love. *(spread arms wide and bring into a hug position across chest)*

God is love. *(repeat action)*

Little baby, oh so small,

I will watch over you.

Respond

Use these ideas to adapt the Respond activities on page 36.

Candle snack: Help children with banana and pineapple ring, or prepare in advance.

Shining light: make sure children wear a painting smock or other protective clothing

Collage: Cut out the picture of Jesus ahead of time.



Tips for Three-year-olds

- Baptism may be a new event for children in this age group – they may not have seen a baptism or may not remember any baptisms they have seen. Explain baptism in

your tradition as simply as you can, perhaps acting it out with a baby doll. Tell children that while we often baptize babies in church people of all ages can be baptized.

Coming through the Waters Mark 1:4–11

A supplemental resource to adapt sessions for groups consisting mostly of three-year-olds.

Jesus is Baptized

(based on Mark 1:4–11)

(Ask children to sit beside the blue cloth river. Give each child a paper figure with facial features drawn on. Have story figures of Mark, John, Jesus and the dove nearby.)

dipped them into the water. (Invite children to dip their figures in the “water.”) The people felt so clean. It was a wonderful feeling. (Children place figures beside the river again.)

(Show Mark figure.) This is Mark and here is one of the stories he wrote about Jesus...

Jesus came to the water too. (Show Jesus figure.) “John, please baptize me, too,” said Jesus. So John walked into the water with Jesus. John dipped Jesus into the water and said a prayer.

It was such a hot day! Lots of people stood beside the river. (Children place their figures beside the river.) The people felt the sun. They shaded their eyes with their hands. They were listening to John. John was standing in the water. (Place John figure in the “water.”) “Someone is coming to show us God’s love,” said John. “It’s time to get ready. Come and be baptized.”

Then something very, very special happened. Jesus felt God’s love deep inside and all around. Up in the sky a dove flew down and touched Jesus gently. (Touch the dove figure to the Jesus figure.) Jesus felt as if God was speaking to him. “I love you. I am so proud of you.”

Some of the people went into the water. They felt the water on their toes. They felt the water on their knees. John

What a special time for Jesus! Now Jesus was ready to tell everyone about God’s love.

Optional activity after the story

Re-enact the story Invite children to gather beside the blue fabric from the story. Choose who will be Jesus and who will be John. As “John baptizes Jesus” by pretending to scoop water up from the “river,” invite the rest of the children to say, “God loves Jesus.” Repeat with other children in the roles. Explain that some people are baptized when they are little babies and some people are baptized when they are grownups, like Jesus.

Drip drop, drip drop,
water washes me,
Drip drop, drip drop,
it cleans me, can’t you see?

Chant “Drip Drop”

Drip drop, drip drop,
water drips on me.
Drip drop, drip drop,
it splashes, can’t you see?

Drip drop, drip drop,
water feels so good to me.
Drip drop, drip drop,
it cools me, can’t you see?

Respond

Use these ideas to adapt the Respond activities on page 42.

- ❑ **Painting:** Use large brushes and demonstrate how to gently paint the wash over the papers.
- ❑ **Mural:** Keep the mural to a small size. Help children as needed to draw themselves.

- ❑ **Glitter globe:** Add the glycerine and glitter for the children, but let them add the dove shapes.



Tips for Three-year-olds

- Children in this age group might wonder why Samuel isn't living with his parents, and this might worry them. You can explain that Eli was looking after Samuel.
- They show an increased ability to listen to and understand conversations, stories, songs and poems.

Coming through the Night

1 Samuel 3:1–10
(11–20)

A supplemental resource to adapt sessions for groups consisting mostly of three-year-olds.

(Have one child be Eli. Indicate where Eli's bed will be. All the other children will be Samuel. Indicate where they will sleep. Encourage the children to listen and do the actions as much as possible.)

Samuel lived with Eli. Eli was old and couldn't see very well. Samuel was Eli's helper.

Every day Samuel lit the lamps in the temple (*pretend to light a lamp*).

Every day Samuel swept the floors (*pretend to sweep*).

Every day Samuel prepared the food (*pretend to mix food in a bowl*).

Samuel learned a lot about God from Eli. Eli was a very wise person.

One night, Samuel was sleeping on his mat (*pretend to sleep*). Suddenly Samuel heard a voice, "Samuel! Samuel!"

Samuel got up and went to Eli's room (*walk over to Eli's "bed"*). "Here I am. Did you call me?" Samuel asked Eli.

Eli woke up. "No," he said. "I didn't call you. It must have been a dream. Go back to bed." So Samuel went back to

Samuel Hears a Voice

(based on 1 Samuel 3:1–10, 11–20)

bed, and tried to sleep again (*return to Samuel's bed*).

Soon Samuel heard the voice again, "Samuel! Samuel!" Samuel went back to Eli's room (*walk over to Eli's "bed"*). Eli was sleeping again. Samuel said, "Eli, here I am. I heard your call."

Eli woke up. "Samuel, I didn't call you. Please go back to bed" (*return to Samuel's "bed"*). So Samuel went back to bed. (*return to mat*)

Then Samuel heard the voice again, "Samuel! Samuel!" Now Samuel was worried. Samuel jumped out of bed and ran quickly into Eli's room (*run to Eli's bed*).

This time, Eli said, "Samuel, I did not call you, but I think I know who did call you. If you hear the voice again, say, 'Here I am, God. I'm listening. What do you want me to do?' (*pause*) Now go back to bed." (*return to Samuel's "bed"*).

Samuel went back to bed. Soon Samuel heard God calling out his name, "Samuel! Samuel!"

Samuel listened. And then Samuel said, "Here I am God, I'm listening. What do you want me to do?"

And God spoke to Samuel about special things to come. Now Samuel would be God's messenger.

Optional activity after the story

Sing "Who Is Calling?"

(tune: "Frère Jacques")

Listen, listen. (*Cup hands around ears.*)

Listen listen.

Who is calling? Who is calling?

God is always calling us. God is always calling us.
(*Clap hands.*)

God loves us. God loves us.

(*Point and name each person.*)

Respond

Use these ideas to adapt the Respond activities on page 48.

- ❑ **Activity sheet:** Prepare Resource Sheet by gluing onto a sheet of construction paper or poster board. Make sure Samuel's body is completely glued to the construction paper before cutting along the solid bold line.
- ❑ **Cup puppet:** Glue the yarn hair onto the cups before the session.
- ❑ **Message poster:** If the children have difficulty articulating messages about God's love, ask them, "Who does God love?" Print the question and answer "Everyone!" on the poster board. Then, trace the children's hands around the words and encourage the children to decorate their hands.



Tips for Three-year-olds

- Three year olds are just beginning to learn about living in God's way.
- They are concrete thinkers and will not yet understand that to "follow Jesus" means

to live in God's way. You can help them understand through games like "follow the leader" that following also means imitating someone's actions.

Coming through the Call

Mark 1:14–20

A supplemental resource to adapt sessions for groups consisting mostly of three-year-olds.

Jesus' New Friends

(based on Mark 1:14–20)

(Sit in the boat that was created on the floor. Practice the following actions and sounds before telling the story.)

the actions while saying: loop, roll, and tie; loop, roll, and tie.)

Swoosh, splash, and stretch: pretend throwing a net into sea and then pulling it out

Loop, roll, and tie: roll hands over each other and then clap once.

One day, long ago, Simon and Andrew were in their boat. They were fishing. Simon and Andrew threw their nets into the water to catch some fish. (Do the actions while saying: swoosh, splash, and stretch; swoosh, splash, and stretch.)

James and John were in their boat, too. They were fixing their fishing nets so they could catch some more fish. (Do

Then Simon and Andrew looked up. And James and John looked up.

They saw someone walking along the shore. They heard a voice calling out to them, "Simon! Andrew! James! John! Come and follow me. I need friends like you to help me."

Simon, Andrew, James, and John stopped what they were doing. Simon and Andrew got right out of their boat. James and John got right out of their boat. And they went over to the man who had called them. It was Jesus. Wow! "Yes, we'll come with you," they said.

Now Jesus had more friends to help. Simon, Andrew, James, and John would travel together with Jesus. They would tell everyone about God's love.

Optional activity after the story

Continue to sit in the boat. Show the story figure of Jesus and ask children to imagine that Jesus is calling us today. Invite children to "climb out of the boat" as Jesus "calls" each one: "(Child's name), come and follow me." Once all of the children are out of the boat join hands in a long line and walk around the room as you sing:

Sing "Come and Follow Jesus"

(tune: "Itsy, Bitsy, Spider")

Come and follow Jesus.

Come and follow now.

Join your hands with mine

and come and follow now.

Come and follow Jesus.

Come and follow now.

And we all can go together.

Let's go follow now.

Respond

Use these ideas to adapt the Respond activities on page 54.

- Drawing activity:** Provide yourself with an activity sheet and invite the children to copy you as you connect each child to the boat.
- Footprint poster:** Draw a line with pencil on the poster board for children to follow as they glue on their footprints to form a pathway.

- Fishing game:** Have more than one fishing pole ready so the children will not have to wait too long for their turn. Make sure that the yarn "fishing line" is only about 45cm/18in long so that the lines of the fishing poles don't tangle during the game.



Tips for Three-year-olds

- Young children are aware that when someone is sick or tired or frightened another person's presence can help them to feel better.
- The children in this age group are beginning to learn about the love and care of a community of faith and the ways in which those in the church follow Jesus' example to reach out to one another.

Coming through the Holy Places Mark 1:21–28

A supplemental resource to adapt sessions for groups consisting mostly of three-year-olds.

Jesus Cares

(based on Mark 1:21–28)

"Come and hear!"

"Come and hear Jesus!"

loved the man so much. Jesus gently touched the man. Jesus talked to him in a quiet voice.

The people came running. The people wanted to hear Jesus. They wanted to see Jesus. (*Invite children to take a figure each and place them around the figure of Jesus.*) Everyone waited for Jesus to talk.

Suddenly a man started shouting. He waved his arms in the air. The rest of the people wondered, "Who is this noisy person?" The people moved away. They did not want to sit beside the noisy person. (*Have children move their figures back a little.*)

But Jesus did not move away. (*Invite a child to place the chosen figure next to Jesus.*) Jesus looked at the man. Jesus

The angry man listened. He felt God's love all around him and deep inside. He felt happy. Jesus had made him feel better.

The people were so surprised! "Did you see what Jesus did?" they asked. "Jesus helped that man with a gentle touch and quiet words. We have to tell everyone what happened! Let's go!"

The people ran to tell other people about Jesus. They would tell everyone about Jesus' love. (*Invite children to say, "Jesus loves everyone."*)

Optional activity after the story

Chant

(Stand in a circle. Repeat the chant until you have named each child. Then repeat first verse.)

Let's tell all our friends,
that Jesus loves us so.

Let's tell all our friends,
that Jesus loves us so.

Let's tell (*child's name*) that Jesus loves (*her or him*) so,
that Jesus loves us so.

Let's tell all our friends,
that Jesus loves us so.

Respond

Use these ideas to adapt the Respond activities on page 60.

- ❑ **Story puppet:** Instead of asking children to re-tell this week's story, teach them a simple phrase such as, "Jesus loves you," that they can use when they make their puppets "speak."
- ❑ **Hand bouquet:** Trace children's hand shapes on two layers of construction paper so they can take an extra hand flower home.
- ❑ **Collage:** Pre-cut pictures of people to glue around the figure of Jesus and use large glue sticks rather than a liquid glue.



Tips for Three-year-olds

- Very young children can be naturally caring and nurturing. They offer compassion freely and unequivocally, especially when they notice that someone is upset.
- In this session the children are encouraged to think about the care they receive within their families and how they might be caregivers themselves. In these discussions be aware of those that might be in difficult family situations.

Coming through Captivity Mark 1:29–39

A supplemental resource to adapt sessions for groups consisting mostly of three-year-olds.

Spreading God's Love

(based on Mark 1:29–39)

One day Jesus and Jesus' friends stopped at Simon's house. (*Invite a child to place the chosen Simon figure beside Jesus.*) When they went in the house everyone was whispering. "Shh," said Andrew, "our mother is sick. We don't know what to do."

Jesus went to the woman's bed. Jesus gently took her hand and lifted her up. Suddenly she was well again! (*Invite a child to place the chosen woman figure next to Jesus.*) The woman was so happy. She made delicious food for Jesus and Jesus' friends and made a place for them to stay the night.

Everyone heard about Jesus. They wanted Jesus to help them, too. (*Invite children to each take a figure and place it around the figure of Jesus.*) More and more and more people

came. (*Add remaining figures, if any.*) Jesus spread God's love to everyone.

Then, Jesus wanted to be alone. (*Take the figure of Jesus and together walk around the room and find a "quiet place" to sit down.*) Jesus wanted to pray to God. (*Sit quietly together and then say "Amen" to show that quiet praying time is over. Place the Jesus figure back in the display space.*)

Soon it was time for Jesus and Jesus' friends to say goodbye. They were going to tell lots more people that God loves them. They had a lot of work to do. And every day, more and more people learned about God's love.

Optional activity after the story

Song "God's Love"

(tune: "Muffin Man")

Have you heard about God's love,
about God's love, about God's love?
Have you heard about God's love?
God loves each one of us.

Can you show a friend God's love,
show God's love, show God's love?
Can you show a friend God's love?
God loves each one of us.

Respond

Use these ideas to adapt the Respond activities on page 60.

- ❑ **Caring followers:** Tape each set of figures to the table to make it easier for children to decorate them. You may want to add the children's names to the dolls.
- ❑ **Gifts of serving:** The children may become a little distracted by the toys but this is a simple concrete way for them to show God's love. You might want to offer them some playtime with the toys when their task is done.



Tips for Three-year-olds

- Very young children readily accept the unexplainable. Every moment of their everyday lives can hold amazing new wonders as they learn and grow.
- Three-year-olds love asking “Why?” though they many not always need a concrete answer. Although this week’s story is one of mystery, children can be encouraged to use their imaginations as they wonder.

Coming through the Cloud Mark 9:2–9

A supplemental resource to adapt sessions for groups consisting mostly of three-year-olds.

On the Mountaintop

(based on Mark 9:2–9)

(Sit a distance away from the “mountain” that the children created earlier. In the story, each time you say, “Come with me and see,” beckon to the children and move a bit closer to the mountain until they are at the “base” of the mountain.)

Jesus and his friends Peter, James and John were going on a hike.

Up, up, up they go.

Come with me and see.

They climbed a big mountain.

Up, up, up the mountain they go.

Come with me and see.

Jesus climbed to the top. Peter, James and John stopped part way.

(Place the Jesus figure on the top of the “mountain.”)

Peter, James, and John could hardly believe their eyes.

“Look up there! Is that really Jesus?”

“His clothes are shiny and white!”

Come with me and see.

(Place the figures of Moses and Elijah beside Jesus.)

“Who is standing with Jesus? Is that Moses?”

“Is that Elijah? Yes, yes, it is!”

Come with me and see.

“Listen! What do you hear?” (pause)

Peter, James, and John heard God say,

“I love Jesus. Listen to Jesus.”

Come with me and see.

(Remove the two figures of the prophets.)

Suddenly, Jesus was alone at the top of the mountain.

Jesus smiled and said to his friends, “Don’t be afraid. Let’s go down now.”

Down, down the mountain they went.

Peter, James, and John wondered about what they saw.

They wondered, and wondered, and wondered.

Optional activity after the story

Dramatize the story Invite children to be Jesus, Peter, James, and John. Read the story again (*without the refrain*) and have them pretend to climb a mountain together. Jesus might cover himself with a white cloth at the appropriate time.

Chant

Call out softly. (*use soft voice*)

Call out loudly. (*use loud voice*)

God loves Jesus and God loves you!

(*place hands like a megaphone*)

Call it out now.

Call out high. (*reach up high*)

Call out low. (*crouch down low*)

God loves Jesus and God loves you. (*place hands like a megaphone*)

Call it out now.

Respond

Use these ideas to adapt the Respond activities on page 72.

- Story puppets:** As children in this age group may not remember the story to retell to others, give them copies of the story to take home and have them practice saying “Come with me and see.”
- Window hanger:** Squeeze excess oil out of the cotton balls before giving to the children, so that they won’t drip.
- Response centre:** Consider including play dough as well. The children may want to play with the materials rather than make something with them; affirm them in this choice.