



### Tips for Three-year-olds

- Emotionally they need familiar adults nearby for security as they explore and play.
- They're learning to recognize the causes of feelings, although they can still fall apart under stress.

#### Sprouting Leaves Jeremiah 33:14–16

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

*(Teach the refrain, "God is with us!" Have the children say this refrain as indicated in the story, cupping their hands around their mouths as if they were speaking through a megaphone.)*

A long time ago there were some people who were very afraid and sad. *(Show figure of group of people.)* There was some trouble in their country. "What will happen to us?" the people cried. "Will we have to leave our homes? Where will we live?" They felt scared and lonely. Then God gave a special message to a person named Jeremiah. *(Show Jeremiah figure.)*

### God Is Near

(based on Jeremiah 33:14–16)

Jeremiah shouted out this good news message to everyone: "God is with us; God is near."

The message was passed from one person to another. At first it sounded like a quiet whisper.

**God is with us!** *(Say in a whisper.)*

But as more and more people heard the good news the message became louder and louder.

**God is with us!** *(Use louder voices.)*

Whenever they were scared and lonely, the people would say:

**God is with us!** *(Use even louder voices.)*

God's promise helped the people not to be afraid.

### Optional activity after the story

**Activity** Invite children to pass on God's special message to others just as Jeremiah did. Encourage the children to use their hands as "megaphones" and move around the group saying to each other, "God is with us!"

### Respond

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

- Advent cards** Use larger illustrations from Christmas cards for ease in gluing.
- Advent chain** Make strips large enough for children to staple easily.
- Door decoration** Tie bells on ahead of time and provide stickers and large-sized crayons.



### Tips for Three-year-olds

- They like to please and need adult support and approval.
- They need to feel valued and loved.

#### The Sound of a Promise Kept Luke 1:68–79

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

### What a Surprise!

(based on Luke 1:5–25, 68–79)

*Invite children to repeat the phrase, "What a surprise!" after you. (Pronunciation for Zechariah: zeh-kuh-RYE-uh)*

Zechariah and Elizabeth lived a long time ago. They loved each other very much but were sad because they had no children.

One day, when Zechariah was working in the temple, he looked up and saw an angel! **What a surprise!**

The angel said, "Don't be afraid. You and Elizabeth are going to have a baby boy." **What a surprise!**

The angel also said, "You will call him John. When he grows up he will help the people get ready for Jesus."

When Zechariah went outside of the temple, people could see he was excited. But Zechariah couldn't tell them why because he suddenly couldn't talk! **What a surprise!** Elizabeth and Zechariah did have a baby. They were very happy (*show the figures of Zechariah, Elizabeth, and baby John*). Everyone thought that the baby would be called Zechariah like his father.

"No," Elizabeth said, "the baby's name is John." **What a surprise!**

Then suddenly Zechariah could speak again! **What a surprise!**

Zechariah sang a thank-you song to God for baby John.

### Optional activity after the story

Choose only one or two of the options provided.

#### Respond

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

- Response centre** Provide construction paper and invite children to use the materials to create "happy pictures."
- Celebration hats** Print names on the paper plates ahead of time.

- Angel decoration** Prepare an angel for each child; during group time have them add facial features, decorate, and glue on yarn hair.



### Tips for Three-year-olds

- They are beginning to initiate conversations and enjoy sharing their “news.”
- They may feel the stress of interrupted routines at this time of year.

### Collide with a Promise Kept Luke 3:7–18

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

### Get Ready!

(based on Luke 3:7–18)

*(Invite the children to cup their hands over their mouths like a megaphone, and repeat the phrase “Get ready!” after each time you say it. Give the figures of John and the group of people to two children. Have them hold up their figures when you point to each one as you read the lines for “John” or the “people.”)*

John had something important to tell the people. “Someone special is coming. **Get ready!**”

“What should we do?” asked the people.

John said, “Share your food with people who are hungry.”

“Yes,” said the people, “we promise!”

John said, “If you have more clothes than you need, share them too.”

“Yes,” said the people, “we promise!”

More people came to see John, and he had a message for them too. “Someone special is coming. **Get ready!**”

“What should we do?” they asked.

John said, “Don’t take money that doesn’t belong to you.”

“Yes,” said the people, “we promise!”

“Someone special is coming. **Get ready!**” Many people listened to John.

They stopped doing wrong things. They promised to do what is right.

**Get ready!** Someone special was coming. It was Jesus. Jesus was coming to tell everyone about God’s love.

### Optional activity after the story

Just do the art engagement activity and the song.

### Respond

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

**Booklets** Prepare booklets by gluing the sentence and the pictures from the resource sheet “Advent Giving” onto the pages. Distribute the booklets, review the images together, and invite children to colour the pictures.

**Good news bells** Thread bells onto ribbon ahead of time.



### Tips for Three-year-olds

- They love babies and stories about babies.
- They enjoy dramatic play.

### Welcoming the Goodness of God Luke 1:39–45

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

## Mary's Song

(based on **Luke 1:39–45** and **Luke 2:3–7**)

Place nearby the figures of Mary and Elizabeth (from the *Storytelling Resources poster*) and Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus (from the *Virtual Resources Booklet*). Invite children to join you in singing Mary's song

in bold to the tune of "I'm a Little Teapot."

Mary was going to have a baby (show Mary figure). She wanted to share her happiness and excitement with her cousin Elizabeth (show Elizabeth figure). Mary walked all the way to Elizabeth's house. Mary and Elizabeth laughed and hugged each other. Mary felt so excited she sang this song.

**I am feeling happy, here's my song.**

**I can sing to God all day long.**

**I am feeling happy, what shall I do?**

**Let's sing together, me and you.**

Then Mary went back home. Mary and Joseph waited for their baby to be born (show figures of Mary and Joseph). They were excited and happy. They couldn't wait for Jesus to be born. Mary sang her song to her baby growing inside her.

**I am feeling happy, here's my song.**

**I can sing to God all day long.**

**I am feeling happy, what shall I do?**

**Let's sing together, me and you.**

Before the baby was born Mary and Joseph had to travel to Bethlehem. They had to walk a long way. Mary and Joseph looked for a place to stay. Finally a kind person offered Mary and Joseph a place to sleep in a stable with the animals. And that night baby Jesus was born. Mary wrapped Jesus in a soft blanket and she sang her song.

**I am feeling happy, here's my song.**

**I can sing to God all day long.**

**I am feeling happy, what shall I do?**

**I'll sing my song to welcome you.**

### Optional activity after the story

Sing the song "Good News" (p. 92).

### Respond

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

- Drama** Have the children choose costumes and then read the story again as they act it out.
- Rocking baby** Prepare materials by gluing the circles from the resource sheet onto cardboard backing. Then have the children colour these, fold them, and sing the song.

- Shakers** Have the children decorate their cups before filling and taping together.

**NOTE:** There is no supplemental materials for December 30 and January 6 as these sessions are designed for all ages.



### Tips for Three-year-olds

- They are beginning to develop friendships with peers but parents are still the primary source of love and support.
- They need affirmation and thrive when they know that they are loved.

### Remembering God's Promises

Luke 3:15–17, 21–22

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

## Jesus Is Baptized

(based on Luke 3:15–17, 21–22)

*(Have a blue cloth and figures of Jesus, John, and the group of people close by.)*

Then, one day, Jesus came to the river. *(Show figure of Jesus.)*

Jesus smiled and said to John, "Please baptize me, too." *(Dip Jesus into the cloth "river.")*

One day some people gathered beside a river. *(Spread out blue cloth to make a "river.")*

They came to hear John teach. *(Show figure of John.)*

The people came to be baptized to show they wanted to live in God's way.

So John dipped the people in the water to baptize them. *(Dig the figure of the group of people into the cloth "river.")*

When the people came up out of the water, they felt clean and new inside. It was a wonderful feeling.

Jesus felt the cool water in his hair and on his face. Then he prayed...and as he prayed it felt like a bright warm light was shining all around. Jesus saw a beautiful dove come down from the sky. And deep down and all around, Jesus heard God say, "I love you. I am so pleased with you." Jesus felt very, very close to God. And all the people felt close to God. They knew that they were God's beloved children too.

### Optional activity after the story

Pour some more water into the bowl. Invite each child, in turn, to scoop some water with cupped hands and then let the water pour back into the basin. As each child does this, say, "God loves *(Child's name)*!" Have a hand towel available.

### Respond

Use these ideas to adapt the Respond activities on page 46.

**Drama** You might choose to be John as the children take turns being Jesus.

**Blessing squares** Use a heavier weave of fabric to make it easier to decorate.



### Tips for Three-year-olds

- They often live in a world of “make believe” and enjoy stories about mysterious events.
- They usually really enjoy parties.

#### Witness to God’s New Way in the World

##### John 2:1–11

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

## Jesus Goes to a Party!

(based on John 2:1–11)

*(Have the story figures and a recording of lively music nearby.)*

Jesus said to the helpers. “Fill them right to the top.”  
*(Show the figure of the servants.)*

Jesus and his friends were at a party. *(Show the figure of Jesus.)* Jesus’ mother Mary was there too. They were celebrating a wedding. *(Show the figure of the wedding guests.)* There was delicious food. There was dancing and laughing and singing.

*(Play a recording of lively music and encourage children to dance freely around the room.)*

After a little while, Mary said to Jesus, “Oh no! There is lots of food but nothing left to drink. Can you help?” Jesus saw six huge stone jars. “Fill those jars with water,”

The helpers filled the jars. The water splashed and splashed into one...two...three...four...five...six...until all the jars were overflowing. *(Invite the children to make big scooping movements as if they were filling the jars.)*

Then Jesus said, “Now serve this drink to the people.” So the helpers dipped a glass into one jar. And suddenly it wasn’t water anymore. It was wine! Everyone was so surprised. Jesus’ friends smiled at each other. They knew Jesus had done something wonderful. They knew that Jesus was showing everyone God’s love.

### Optional activity after the story

**Sing** “God’s Love” (on resource sheet “Additional Songs,” p. 92) and have a surprise party together.

### Respond

Use these ideas to adapt the Respond activities on page 52.

- Bell sticks** Tie bells onto the bottom of lengths of ribbon ahead of time.



### Tips for Three-year-olds

- They are beginning to understand sharing and cooperative play.
- They are concrete thinkers and the poster *Jesus Teaching in the Synagogue* can help them imagine the scene.

### Shaped by God's Word Luke 4:14–21

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

## Jesus Shares Good News

(based on **Luke 4:14–21**)

*(Have the scroll and the figures of Jesus and the crowd nearby.)*

scroll and begin to unroll it as you read.)

"God loves you. God is always with you."

The people listened carefully. (Show the figure of the group of people.)

One day Jesus went back to Nazareth where he had lived when he was a little boy. He went with the people to the synagogue to sing and pray to God. (Show figure of Jesus.) Jesus was chosen to be one of the readers. Jesus unrolled the scroll and began to read... (Hold up the

Then Jesus rolled up the scroll (roll up the scroll), and handed it back to the helper. "These are special words," Jesus said. "God wants you to know that I will help you to live in God's way."

### Optional activity after the story

**Chant** Say the chant below and then invite children to name things that show God's way such as sharing toys, sharing food, caring for pets, or helping family members. Create some actions to show each idea and then say the chant again.

What did Jesus say?  
God's way is our way,  
each and every day.  
God's way is our way.  
Hip, hip hooray!

### Respond

Use these ideas to adapt the Respond activities on page 58.

- Scrolls** Prepare scrolls ahead of time for children to decorate and roll.



### Tips for Three-year-olds

- They are getting better at focusing on the tasks at hand.
- They know the frustration of not getting to do what they want.

#### Power of the Word Luke 4:21–30

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

### Listen to Me

(based on **Luke 4:21–30**)

*(Have the scroll, the figure of Jesus, and the figure of the crowd from the Storytelling Resources posters.)*

Jesus was in the synagogue (*show figure of Jesus*) in Nazareth, the town where he lived when he was growing up. Jesus had just finished reading from the scroll of Isaiah (*show scroll*) and was talking to the people (*show the figure of the crowd*). Jesus tried to help them understand how to live God's way but some people didn't like some of the things he was saying.

"Why are you upset?" Jesus asked. "Other people always listen to me."

The people got angry. "Don't talk to us like that!" they said.

But Jesus wanted to help them understand. "Listen to me," he said. "You need to help people who have no food. You need to help people who are sick."

But the people shouted, "We don't know those people! Don't talk about them! Just tell us how much God loves us!"

Jesus walked away. He felt sad because the people wouldn't listen to him. But he didn't give up. Jesus kept on teaching people how to show God's healing love to everyone.

### Optional activity after the story

**Chant** (*Invite children to say each line after you.*)

Who can show God's love to all?

We can show God's love to all!

Yes, we can! (*clap three times*)

Yes, we can! (*clap three times*)

Yes, we can! (*clap three times*)

### Respond

Use these ideas to adapt the Respond activities on page 64.

- Snappers** Prepare one for each child and have fun making them snap.



### Tips for Three-year-olds

- They enjoy stories about mysterious events.
- They like to “pretend” doing what adults do, so they may especially enjoy “Catching fish” in Respond.

### Being Surprised Luke 5:1–11

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

## The Amazing Catch of Fish

(based on Luke 5:1–11)

*(Practice these cues and responses with the children. Whenever you say **Jesus** – everyone puts their hands over their hearts; **boat** – everyone*

*pretends to row a boat; **people** – everyone stands up then sits down again.)*

One morning **Jesus** was standing on the shore of a big lake, teaching the **people**. Two fishing **boats were sitting nearby** on the sand. Three men – Simon, James, and John – were washing their fishnets. More and more **people** began to gather when they heard that **Jesus** was there. Soon there were so many **people** that it was hard for everyone to see and hear **Jesus**.

So **Jesus** climbed into one of the **boats** and asked Simon to row him out into the water. Then **Jesus** sat down in the **boat** to teach the **people**.

When **Jesus** finished talking, he said to Simon, “Row the **boat** out into the deep water. Put your net in the water and you will catch some fish.”

Simon didn’t believe **Jesus** because they had already been fishing all night and hadn’t caught anything. But he said, “If you say so, we’ll try again.” Soon the net was filled with fish! Simon called to his friends James and John. Soon their **boat** was full of fish too! Simon knew that **Jesus** was a very special person.

As they rowed the **boats** back to shore, **Jesus** said, “I have helped you catch fish. Please come and help me teach **people** about God’s love.”

What do you think they did? (*Listen to the children’s responses.*) Simon, James, and John gathered their things and followed **Jesus** happily. They became **Jesus’** helpers or disciples.

### Optional activity after the story

Sing “God’s Love” (on resource sheet “Additional Songs,” p. 92).

### Respond

Use these ideas to adapt the Respond activities on page 70.

- Wall display** Help children trace their hands and glue on “fins,” as necessary.
- Catching fish** Prepare fishing rods ahead of time.



### Tips for Three-year-olds

- They still need familiar adults nearby when they are hurt or upset.
- They like to help others.

### Being Blessed Luke 6:17–26

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

### God's Blessing

(based on Luke 6:17–26)

*(Practice saying "God loves you!" with the children. Each time you blow some bubbles, have the children repeat the phrase. Wait*

*until the bubbles have dispersed before continuing with the next line.)*

Everywhere Jesus looked, all he could see was people. Mothers and fathers. Children and babies. Grandparents and uncles and aunties. Sad people and hurting people. Sick people and lonely people. People with no money and people who were hungry. Everyone had come to see Jesus. They had heard how kind and gentle Jesus was and they hoped that he could help them. *(Invite children to find a toy person in the room and bring it back to your story area. Imagine that each toy person has come to see Jesus.)*

Jesus looked around. He wanted to help the people feel better. He wanted to bless them, to let them know that God loves them. He said,

"You people who have no money. Even though you are poor, you have God's blessing." (Blow some bubbles.)

**(Children: God loves you!)**

"God doesn't want anyone to be without what they need.

"You people who do not have enough food. Even though you are hungry, you have God's blessing." (Blow some bubbles.)

**(Children: God loves you!)**

"God doesn't want anyone to go without food.

"You people who are crying. Even when you are sad, you have God's blessing." (Blow some bubbles.)

**(Children: God loves you!)**

"God doesn't want anyone to be sad.

"You people who have no friends. Even though you are lonely, you have God's blessing. (Blow some bubbles.)

**(Children: God loves you!)**

God wants everyone to have friends.

The disciples thought about what Jesus said. When everyone has food, clothes, and a place to live; when everyone has a friend; then everyone will be so happy they will jump for joy. *(Blow lots of bubbles.)*

### Optional activity after the story

**Sing** "God's Love" (on resource sheet "Additional Songs," p. 92).

### Respond

Use these ideas to adapt the Respond activities on page 76.

**Blessing block** Glue the "B" to the blocks ahead of time, or help children as necessary.

**Spreading God's blessing** Help children cut out the pictures, as necessary.



### Tips for Three-year-olds

- They still need familiar adults nearby when they are hurt or upset.
- Sharing hugs and love comes easily for them.

#### Be Holy

Luke 6:27–38

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

### Sharing God's Love

(based on Luke 6:27–38)

*Remind children about last week's story. This week's story picks up where last week's story left off. Practice the phrase "God loves*

*you!" with the children. Each time you blow some bubbles, have the children repeat the phrase. Wait until the bubbles have dispersed before continuing with the next line.)*

Everywhere Jesus looked, all he could see was people. Mothers and fathers. Children and babies. Grandparents and uncles and aunties. Sad people and hurting people. Sick people and lonely people. People with no money and people who were hungry. Everyone had come to see Jesus. They had heard how kind and gentle Jesus was and they hoped that he could help them. *(Invite children to find a toy person in the room and bring it back to your story area. Imagine that each toy person has come to see Jesus.)*

Jesus looked around. He wanted to help the people feel better. He wanted to bless them, to let them know that God loves them. He said,

"Look at the sad people who have been yelled at. When you are sad, you can feel happy again by sharing God's love." *(Blow some bubbles.)*

**(Children: God loves you!)**

"Look at the angry people who have been hurt by others. When you are angry, you can be happy again by sharing God's love." *(Blow some bubbles.)*

**(Children: God loves you!)**

"Look at the lonely people who don't have any friends. When you are lonely, you can be happy again by sharing God's love." *(Blow some bubbles.)*

**(Children: God loves you!)**

The disciples thought about what Jesus said. Jesus was teaching them how to live with love, even when they had been hurt. When everyone knows that God loves them, when everyone has a friend, then everyone will be so happy everyone will jump for joy. *(Blow lots of bubbles.)*

### Optional activity after the story

**Chant** *(Invite children to say each line after you.)*

Who can show God's love to all?

We can show God's love to all!

Yes, we can! *(clap three times)*

Yes, we can! *(clap three times)*

Yes, we can! *(clap three times)*

### Respond

Use these ideas to adapt the Respond activities on page 82.

- Balloon people** Prepare the balloons with feet attached beforehand, so that children just have to draw the face.



### Tips for Three-year-olds

- They love dramatic play and can get involved in imagined scenarios.
- They don't need to have mystery explained.

#### Living in Glory Luke 9:28–36 (37–43)

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

### Jesus Shines

(based on Luke 9:28–36)

*(Invite children to use their imaginations and to do the actions after each section of the story.)*

*(Rub your eyes and then shade them as if against a glaring light. Say, "Wow! What glory!")*

One day Jesus asked his friends Peter, James, and John to go with him to the top of a mountain to pray. Jesus' friends looked at the mountain. It was a big mountain! But Jesus was their teacher and they would go with him. *(Make climbing motions. Shade eyes and look around. Breathe deeply.)*

"Look at Jesus!" Peter said. "His face is shining like the sun and his clothes are shiny white. And there are two people talking to him. Where did they come from?" The three friends looked at each other. What was happening?

Finally, they reached the top of the mountain. They were tired. For a while they sat together looking at the view. Peter, James, and John began to feel sleepy. Then a very strange and very wonderful thing happened. It was like a dream but not a dream. Suddenly there in front of them was a dazzling bright light that seemed to be all around Jesus.

Just then a cloud came and covered Jesus. They heard God say, "This is my beloved. I love him. Listen to him." Jesus friends were scared. They crouched down and covered their eyes. *(Cover your head with your arms.)*

When they opened their eyes, Jesus was standing alone again. Jesus smiled at his friends. "Don't be afraid," he said. "Come. It's time to go." The three friends followed Jesus back down the mountain. *(Make walking motions.)* They thought about the glory they had seen with Jesus. It was too wonderful to talk about.

#### Optional activity after the story

Sing "This Little Light of Mine" (p. 92).

#### Respond

Use these ideas to adapt the Respond activities on page 88.

- Crowns** Have children apply glue to their crown shapes with glue sticks and then sprinkle the glitter on these yourself, as you hold them over a tray or dish.