



**Bible Story:** Joyful, Joyful (Gabriel Appears to Mary) • **Luke 1:26-56**

**Bottom Line:** You can have joy because God has a plan for you.

**Memory Verse:** *Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you, he is the Messiah, the Lord.*  
Luke 2:11 (NIV)

**Life App:** Christmas—Celebrating Jesus, God’s greatest gift

### **Bible Story** [Talk About God | Bible Story]

**What You Need:** Bible, paper, markers

**What You Do:** Read **Luke 1:26-56**

- As you’re reading, have kids draw out the scene based on only what you hear in the Bible.
- Instruct kids not to add details they’ve heard from movies or books. This project should only reflect the story as it’s told in the Book of Luke.
- Today the main characters and details are the angel (Gabriel) talking to Mary, and then Mary going to visit cousin Elizabeth (also pregnant), inside Elizabeth’s home for three months.
- Keep this drawing in a safe place and we’ll use it again next week. We’ll use this drawing so we can see the progress of the story throughout the rest of the month.

### **Discussion Questions** [Talk about God | Bible Story Review]

[For Older Kids]

**What You Need:** No supplies needed

**What You Do:**

**Ask:**

- What are your family’s plans for Christmas?
- Do you like having set plans, loose plans, or no plans? (Ask kids to elaborate on their responses.)
- How was Jesus a part of God’s plan all along?
- What does it mean to you to know that God sent Jesus for you? How does it make you feel?

### **Joy Stealers** [Live for God | Application Activity]

**What You Need:** No supplies needed

**What You Do:**

- Read the scenarios below. Each scenario represents a situation where it might be easy to lose our joy.
- The kids will listen to the entire scenario.
- Then ask the kids to brainstorm how you might turn the scenario around to find joy anyway.

Scenarios:

- Your dad forgot to get the cookies for your holiday party at school. *(You remind him in the car on the way to school, so he makes a quick stop at the store to buy your favorite frosted cookies.)*
- Your mom bought you a different bike than the one you actually wanted. *(You realize the bike is cooler than the one you picked out online.)*
- You dropped the gift you made for your mom at school. *(You ask your teacher if she can help you fix it, and she does.)*
- You forgot to get a gift for your sister for Christmas. *(You decide to make her something this year.)*
- Your little brother ate the rest of the gumdrops, and now you can't finish the roof on your gingerbread house. *(You decide to use cereal to cover the rest.)*
- You built a snowman in the front yard. The next day, the snow melted, and your frosty friend is gone. *(You splash in the puddles left by the melted snow.)*
- Your sister ate the last homemade Christmas cookie. *(You convince your mom to let you help make a new batch of cookies.)*
- Your parents tell you that instead of traveling to your grandparents this year, you'll need to stay home. *(You could video chat with your grandparents or invite them to travel to see you, instead.)*
- Your dog jumps up to catch a fly and knocks over the Christmas tree. *(You get to decorate your tree twice this year!)*
- When you try to use the remote-controlled car you got for Christmas, it won't work. *(Your dad calls the company, and they ship you a new one. In the meantime, you take apart the broken one, figure out why it won't work and fix it. Now, you have TWO remote-controlled cars!)*

**What You Say:**

"Wow, we talked about a lot of different emotions in these scenarios! Have you ever heard someone say they have 'all the feels' when they are experiencing a lot of emotions at once?"

"Our story today has 'all the feels' in it, too. How did Mary feel when she was a young girl, thinking of her future? *(happy, hopeful, maybe curious about her future)* How about when the mighty angel Gabriel burst into her life? *(scared, confused)* What about after she heard what he had to say? *(confused, worried, peaceful, happy, curious, excited, nervous)* Elizabeth had some feelings, too. When she saw Mary arrive, she was so happy that the baby she carried jumped with excitement!"

"But today we're talking about joy. Is joy a feeling? *(Invite answers—they might be mixed.)* Joy is more than just feeling happy or excited. Joy is choosing to trust God even when you don't know all the answers. Joy is choosing not to be anxious or upset about the things you don't know and instead trusting God because you know He is good and He has a plan for your life. Today, we heard that **[Bottom Line] you can have joy because God has a plan for you.**

"Mary discovered God's plan was NOT like her plan, but she had joy because she trusted God. She trusted that He is good, and she trusted that His plan for her life was good. Sometimes, especially this year, life might not look the way you planned, but you can choose to trust God the same way Mary did."

**Close your group in prayer:**

"Dear God, thank You for Your plans for us, our families, and our world. Please help us remember that Your plans are good and lead to life. Give us joy this season as we follow You and celebrate Jesus. Amen."