

Today's Suggested Schedule—February 15, 2026

Bible Story: Zacchaeus • *Luke 19:1-10*

Bottom Line: The love of Jesus can change things for the better.

Monthly Memory Verse: *"I give you a new command. Love one another. You must love one another, just as I have loved you."* • John 13:34 NIV

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

ORDER OF SERVICE

OPENING SMALL GROUP (20 minutes)

SOCIAL: Providing Time for Fun Interaction

Early Arriver /

Opening Activity

LARGE GROUP (30-35 minutes)

WORSHIP: Inviting People to Respond to God

STORY: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways

- Introduce Monthly Theme Poster
- Review Monthly Memory Verse Poster
- Review Weekly Bottom Line Poster
- Teaching (Video)
- Review Weekly Bottom Line Poster

SMALL GROUP (25-30 minutes)

GROUPS: Creating a Safe Place to Connect

Reinforcement Activity

Prayer Journal

TAKE HOME

Devotional Page

Social
Opening Activity
Made to Play

Uses Minimal Supplies

Before kids arrive, pray for kids who will visit your group for the first time. Thank God that His love has the power to change our hearts and our habits. Recall an age-appropriate story about a time when experiencing God’s love (or love from a believer) softened your heart and inspired you to change or make something right. Ask God to help the kids in your group understand that Jesus doesn’t wait for us to be perfect—He loves us now. Pray that His love would change them in real ways, helping them to be honest, to make things right (like Zacchaeus), and to be a friend to those who feel left out.

What You Need:

- “Tic Tac® Love” Activity Page

What You Do:

- Greet each kid by name with a fist bump, high-five, smile, or wave as they arrive!
- Pair the kids up.
- Give each pair a “Tic Tac Love” board and game pieces.
- Show them how to play Tic-Tac-Toe. One person will be “Jesus” and the other will be “Hearts.”
- Invite them to play several rounds against each other.
- Encourage them to cheer for each other, even if they lose a round.

What You Say:

“Tic-Tac-Toe is such a fun game! It’s great to play with friends. **[Transition]** In our true story from the Bible today, we’re going to hear about a man named Zacchaeus who didn’t have many friends because he was a dishonest tax collector. But one day, he met Jesus, who saw him, and it changed everything! Let’s go find out what happened.”

[Lead your group to the Large Group area.]

LARGE GROUP

What You Need: TV, Pre-Loaded Video Content

What You Do:

1. Introduce/Remind kids about the
 - a. Monthly Theme
 - b. Monthly Memory Verse
 - c. Today's Bottom Line
2. Play Worship Songs
3. Allow kids to grab a snack
4. Play Teaching Video
5. Review Today's Bottom Line

Lead your group to the Small Group activity.

Groups 1/4

1. Unbox the Story

Talk about God | Bible Story Review

Made to Explore

What You Need:

- Box filled with the story props below
- Tree branch (or green construction paper leaf)
- Coin
- Bag of coins
- Food item (plastic or real)
- Foam heart
- Happy face
- Sad face
- Small Jesus figure

What You Do:

- Place the box in the middle of your group.
- Explain that you're going to "unbox" the story of Zacchaeus, just like in an unboxing video.
- Let kids take turns pulling one item out of the box.
- As each item is revealed, ask the kids how it connects to the story by asking the corresponding question.
 - **Tree branch:** "What did Zacchaeus climb to see Jesus?"
 - **Coin:** "What was Zacchaeus's job? What did he do that was unfair?"
 - **Sad face:** "How did people feel about Zacchaeus?"
 - **Jesus figure:** "Who came to town that day?"
 - **Heart:** "Who loved Zacchaeus when no one else did?"
 - **Happy face:** "How did Zacchaeus feel after Jesus showed him love?"
 - **Food item:** "What did Jesus do at Zacchaeus's house?"
 - **Bag of coins:** "What did Jesus do after Zacchaeus was changed by Jesus' love?"

What You Say:

"You unboxed the whole story! Zacchaeus was not a very liked person, but Jesus saw him and loved him anyway. Jesus looked up into the sycamore-fig tree and called him out, saying, 'Zacchaeus, come down at once. I must stay at your house today.' (Luke 19:5 NIV). It changed Zacchaeus! He decided to give back the money he had taken and be generous. That's because **[Bottom Line] the love of Jesus can change things for the better.**"

EveryChild Pro-Tips:

- *This is a highly sensory activity. Allow kids to safely touch and hold each item as it's unboxed. Allow them to look at the item before touching.*
- *Use simple, clear pictures of the items for non-verbal children to point to as you talk about each part of the story.*

Groups 2/4

2. Respond with Love

Live for God | Application Activity

Made to Imagine

What You Need:

- “Respond with Love” Activity Pages

What You Do:

- Read one of the scenario cards aloud.
- Ask the group, “What would you normally want to do in that situation?” (e.g., get mad, say something mean back)
- Then ask: “How can you respond with the love of Jesus instead?”
- Brainstorm kind and loving responses together.
- Continue with each of the scenarios.

What You Say:

“It’s not always easy to choose love, is it? But when we remember how Jesus loved Zacchaeus—even when he had done wrong things—it helps us. Even when everyone was whispering that Jesus had gone to be the ‘guest of a sinner,’ Jesus chose love. We can ask Jesus to help us show love to others too. Zacchaeus’s response of generosity and making things right shows that **[Bottom Line] the love of Jesus can change things for the better.**”

Groups 3/4

3. Draw the Verse

Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity Made to Create

What You Need:

- Bibles
- Paper
- Coloring supplies

What You Do:

- Give every kid a Bible and direct them to look up John 13:34.
- Demonstrate how to look up the verse using the Bible Navigation Tips below:

***Finding verses for 2-3rd 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 the name of the book in the list. When they find the book, lead them to look at the page number beside it. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find that book. Help the kids find the page. When they find the book, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find the correct chapter. Then explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find the correct verse in that chapter.*

- Repeat the verse aloud several times.
- Review any words that might be unfamiliar to the kids.
- Give each kid a piece of paper and coloring supplies.
- Give each kid one part of the verse to write and then illustrate.
 - Kid 1: “I give
 - Kid 2: you a new command.
 - Kid 3: Love
 - Kid 4: one another.
 - Kid 5: You must
 - Kid 6: love
 - Kid 7: one another,
 - Kid 8: just as I
 - Kid 9: have loved you.”
 - Kid 10: John 13:34
- If you have more than 10 kids, pair kids to work together. If you have fewer than 10 kids, give each kid more than one part to write and illustrate.
- Invite the kids to put their pieces of paper together. Read the verse together several times.

What You Say:

“Your illustrations are awesome! These pictures will help us remember the verse! Jesus’ command to love one another is so important. Jesus’ love for Zacchaeus changed his life. Jesus told him, ‘*Today salvation has come to your house*’ (Luke 19:9 NIV). When we follow Jesus’ command, we also see that **[Bottom Line] the love of Jesus can change things for the better.**”

Groups 4/4

4. Pray and Dismiss

Pray to God | Prayer Activity Made to Reflect

What You Need:

- Prayer jar from Week 1
- Bag of candy hearts from Week 1

What To Do:

- Ask the kids to think of one thing they would like to see Jesus change in their hearts for the better. It could be their bad attitude when it comes to doing math, how they're jealous of their little brother, or how they're tempted to lie in a situation because it seems easier.
- Invite them to think of that one thing and talk to Jesus silently and pray, "Dear Jesus, please change my heart in this area. I need Your help to make it better."
- When the kids are done praying silently, give them each a candy heart and encourage them to put it in the prayer jar.
- Explain that sometimes we are the ones who need to be prayed for. Sometimes it's our hearts that need to be changed for the better, and God loves to help us do that!
- Close in a group prayer.
- Store the Prayer Jar in a safe place to use again next week.

What You Say:

"Thank you for sharing your hearts with Jesus. He loves you, and He is powerful enough to help with every single one of these things. Let's pray.

"Dear God, thank You for the story of Zacchaeus. It reminds us that Your love is so powerful. Please help us with the areas we talked to You about. We know that You can make things better. Help us to share Your love with others this week. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."