THE JESUS WAY

DAY CAMP 2023

A 5-day Curriculum for Children's Ministry

"The Jesus Way" was originally written to be used at Solid Rock Day Camp for the summer of 2023. It was used during opening devotion, bible time, crafts, and closing devotion time, with games interspersed throughout the 7 hour day, along with other fun activities. However, you could use the material for a 5 day VBS program, or divide it up to use over several weeks for Sunday School or another form of children's ministry.

Target Age Range:

Elementary children, K-5th grades. In some places, we have made suggestions as to what might work better for older children vs. younger. These are general categories but primarily consist of younger kids being K-2nd grade and older kids being 3rd-5th grade. You may consider dividing the groups based on those who can read well, generally 2nd or 3rd grade and up, and those who are still learning to read, K-1st or 2nd.

Each Lesson Consists of

- Opening Devotion- used as a whole group at the beginning of your time together
- Bible Hub lesson- to be used in small age-appropriate groups so that the lesson can be adjusted as needed
- Craft suggestion
- Extra activity or game suggestion
- Closing Devotion- used as a whole group at the end of your time together

Sample Program Schedule:

6 pm- Opening Devotion

6:20 pm- Bible Hub Lesson, Craft Time, Games (do a rotation of three groups)

6:50 pm- Snack (all together)

7:10 pm- Bible Hub Lesson, Craft Time, Games

7:40 pm- Bible Hub Lesson, Craft Time, Games

8:10 pm- Closing Devotion

8:30 pm- Program ends

Written and compiled by: Melanie Corn, Cody Carpenter, and Pastor Chris Metze.

*If you would like to see and hear a sample of some of the songs and skits used, please see: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1--soxRUuRwHdpSojVTLTAF_d7n2zmD8j?usp=share_link

*Feel free to edit and adapt for your situation.

*Some ideas have been compiled from the website ministry-to-children.com and from Concordia Publishing "Enduring Faith" Sunday school material.

"Jesus Way" graphic by Courtney Altman.

Day 1: Jesus is the Way

Main Idea: **Who is Jesus?**

Main Bible Passage: John 14:1-6

Day 1: Opening Devotion

1. Welcome to VBS/ Camp/ Sunday school!
    a. Get kids pumped! – introduce counselors/ staff/ leaders, having them share their names, a fun fact, counselor "organ," favorite Bible verse, etc…
    b. Sing the Mac N' Cheese Song
        - Standing back to back with someone *"I've got to have it (x4), Give me that Mac n cheese (x4)"*. Do a crazy dance on the "give me that Mac n cheese" part.
    c. Oreo Challenge:
        i. Recruit three or four pairs of volunteers, give them each an Oreo and tell them to place it on their eye. Using only their facial muscles, they must move the Oreo from their eye to their mouth. They compete two at a time.
            1. Get the leaders in on the action, too! Adult leader vs. adult leader is a great way to get the kids excited.
2. Song- "I am the Way!"
    - *I am the way, I am the way, that's what Jesus said, that's what Jesus said. I am the truth, I am the truth, that's what Jesus said, that's what Jesus said. I am the life, I am the life, that's what Jesus said, that's what Jesus said. (Sung to the tune of the first part of "This is the day that the Lord has made")*
3. Ask: "Who is Jesus?"
    a. Allow campers to respond. Take staff responses as well.
        i. You may want to ask some other questions: "Is Jesus just some cool guy? Is He just a good teacher?" (No, He's much

more! He is the Son of God, He is our Savior, Prince of Peace, Shepherd, etc…)

b. After some discussion, say something like this: "Let's read about who *Jesus* says He is!"

4. Bible Verse- St. John 14:6

   a. Read the verse: "St. John 14:6. Jesus said, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

   b. Have them repeat it after you, then say it together. *

   c. Say "This week, we're going to learn who Jesus is! We're going to learn all about Jesus, and we're also going to learn how Jesus teaches us to be like Him, because He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life! We're going to learn all about that during our Bible Hub this morning! Who's excited?" (Hype them up)

5. Review rules and guidelines of your program. Do it in a fun way by having kids or leaders act them out. Say: "Let's follow these rules so that we can all have an awesome week! After we pray, we're going to get into our Family Hubs so you can get to know your counselor and your family hub better!"

6. Prayer (Have campers repeat:)

   a. "Dear Jesus, thank you for being the Way, and the Truth, and the Life! Help us to follow you always. Amen."

7. Consider putting kids into small groups at this time for them to use the following discussion with their leaders, before moving to your next station.

Day 1: Special Family Hub Time (first time together)

1. Gather your family hub into a knee-to-knee circle where you can see and reach every child. Introduce yourself as their leader and the one they need to stay with during your time together. Express how excited you are to have an awesome week with them! Tell them this is our family hub who we will hang out with, do activities with, and get to know better this week!

- You may need to use a “talking stick/ object” for younger kids. Your object could become a “mascot” for your Family Hub. Anything silly will work if you are excited about it!

2. Let kids introduce themselves in a fun way. Try these games:

    1. Younger kids: Name game- have them choose an animal that begins with the same letter as their first name. For example, I would say, my name is “Monkey Melanie.” You may have to help young kids pick one!

    2. Older kids: Name game- they can choose an animal or adjective (descriptive word) that begins with the same letter as their first name. Then have each kid repeat what the person(s) before them said.

    3. Toilet paper introductions- kids take a few squares of toilet paper (however many they want, but not too much!) and then tell one thing about themselves for every square of toilet paper.

3. Do a Family Hub project that will help them bond.

    1. Group flag or craft- Have kids decide on one thing/ animal/ name of their Family Hub and illustrate it. Building consensus is key. Don’t take votes if you can help it.

    2. Older kids could do a group building game like knots or count to 20!

        1. Knots- Everyone stands in a circle. Each person reaches their right hand into the circle and grabs another hand to hold. Then each person puts in their left hand and grabs another hand to hold. Now, the group must work together to untangle themselves without letting go of hands. The end goal is to be standing in a regular circle holding hands.

        2. Count to 20- Everyone closes their eyes and keeps them closed for the whole game. When the leader says “go,” the group must count to 20. If two people say the same number at the same time, the group must start over back at 1. Play until the group can “count to 20” without talking over each other. If players get discouraged, encourage them to work out a pattern. Don’t give too many hints or suggestions ahead of time; rather, allow them to figure it out.

4. Pray for each child by name!

Day 1: Bible Hub Time

1. Opening Prayer
    a. Pray something like: “Dear God, open our hearts and minds to your Word. Help us to learn and grow in you. In Jesus’ Name. Amen.”
2. Main Bible lesson
    a. Ask the question: What is the most important thing in your life?
        i. Allow for kids and staff to respond. Some answers may include “Mom/Dad/Family, pets, etc…”
            1. When they answer, ask “Why?”
    b. Set the scene for the Bible story: Say something like “In today’s Bible story, we see Jesus talking to His disciples. (What’s a disciple? A student, a follower, etc…) They were afraid! Jesus had just told them some scary news: He was going to die on the cross. They thought they were going to lose Jesus! But Jesus tells them some very comforting words.
        i. Read the verses: St. John 14:1-6
            1. Say: “Wow! Jesus told His disciples not to be afraid, but to believe in Him. Then He told them that He was going to prepare a place for them in His Father’s house. What do you think He meant? Bottom line: Jesus went to prepare a place for us in heaven, so that we can live with God forever!

               One of His disciples was confused. St. Thomas asked Him “Lord, we don’t know where you are going!” How did Jesus respond? (Have them repeat the memory verse!)
        ii. Ask the big question**:** “What does Jesus mean when He says that He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life?”
            1. Allow campers to discuss.
                a. Guide discussion as needed, with questions like “What is a ‘way?’”(A path, a road, etc…)

2. The Big Point**:** Jesus is the Way, because He is the only one who can lead us to the Father. Jesus is the Truth because He is the real deal! He's not telling the disciples a lie; He really is God, and He really has come to save us! And He is the Life because He saved us and gives us life when we are baptized and believe in Him!

3. Activity
    a. Prepare a maze beforehand. Utilize your space and make it hard, but safe.
        1. Take four volunteers.
            - Three will be blindfolded, and one will be their guide. The guide will tell them where to go, and when they get off course, will "save" them.
        2. Once the volunteers are blindfolded, have the guide lead them through the maze. This should be fairly easy.
        3. Now, call for three more volunteers to go through the maze.
        4. Blindfold the three, and then announce that, in addition to the guide, there will be other voices telling them where to go. (It's going to be chaotic!) Their job is to listen to the guide amidst the other voices.
        5. Let them try the maze.
        6. Play one or two more rounds, as appropriate.
4. Process the game.
    a. What did we do in this game? (A guide told the blindfolded kids where to go)
    b. Which was easier? When there was only one voice, or when there were many voices? Why was _____ harder?
    c. How might this relate to our Bible passage about how Jesus is the way?
    d. Then ask the big question: Is it always easy to follow Jesus when lots of other voices are trying to tell us where to go? Discuss.

e. Reiterate the Big Point from earlier: Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. We, as Christians need to listen to God, and not all the other voices in the world. Then ask: How do we know what God has to say? (Answers: Read the Bible, go to Church, Hear His Word. Listen to our Christian brothers and sisters.)

5. Extra Activity (if there is time):

    a. Real or Not Real: Use this list to get kids thinking about what might be "Real" or "Not Real." Put up signs to designate one side of the room for "Real" and one side of the room for "Not Real." Have kids move to the side of the room based on what they think. When you get to the biblical ones, tell kids that they will be learning more about the very real things Jesus did when he was on earth.

        i. The longest comedy show was 40 hours and 8 minutes, telling jokes! (Real)

        ii. The longest noodle ever made was 1 mile long! (Not real, it was almost two miles long)

        iii. A lady named Ashley completed a marathon dressed as en elf in 2 hours, 58 minutes, 16 seconds. (Real)

        iv. Eric drank two liters of soda in only 18.45 seconds. (Real)

        v. The most bananas snapped in one minute was 312! (Not real, it was 119)

        vi. The longest someone has ever stood on one foot was 76 hours and 40 minutes. (Real)

        vii. The fastest typing on a keyboard with feet was 103 letters in 40.19 seconds. (Not real, they typed that fast with their nose!)

        viii. The most spoons balanced on someone's face was 31 spoons for 30 seconds. (Real)

        ix. The most people crammed into a smart car was 30. (Not real, it was 20)

        x. Jesus walked on water (real)

        xi. Jesus flew in the air (hmmm… he ascends to heaven, but is that flying? Trick question…)

        xii. Jesus called God his Father (real)

xiii. Jesus fed 100 birds with just a little bit of fish and bread (not real, he feed over 5000 people!)

xiv. Jesus cried when he saw his friends hurting (real)

xv. Conclude by asking: How do we know these things about Jesus are real? (We read the Bible and it tells us!). We know what God has to say to us by reading his Word, the Bible. This week we will learn very real things about Jesus, and how he is the way, and how we can follow his way!

6. Closing Prayer: "Dear God, please help us to listen to you, and to follow you, even when it is hard. In Jesus' Name, Amen."

Day 1: Games

Ichthus Fishes: Early Christians identified each other by the fish symbol. It means Jesus Christ God's Son our Savior. They had to do this in secret because of the way Christians were being persecuted, or hurt for believing in Jesus.

1. Draw fish symbols on paper and have a leader hide them throughout the building or outside. You could use chalk to draw fish on sidewalks.
2. Family hubs travel together holding hands to find fish symbols. Hide fish symbols on different colors of paper, one color for each family hub. Then family hubs can take their designated color when they find it.
3. Designate one leader to be the "Roman" and this person is trying to catch the family hubs in the action of taking a fish, OR not working together, running, or otherwise breaking rules. If the "Roman" catches a family hub, the "Roman" shouts "persecuted!" And they must freeze in place.
4. Designate another leader to be a "Follower of the Jesus Way" and this person unfreezes frozen family hubs by doing something fun with them: giving hugs or high-fives, praying with them, singing a hymn or song with them, etc.
5. Game ends when each family hub has found all of their ichthus fish.

Day 1: Crafts

- Decorate small brown paper bags with name, stickers, and something that represents you. Use these bags to collect crafts throughout your time together.
- Pony beads and pipe cleaner fishes OR Pony beads and pipe cleaner crosses

Day 1: Closing Devotion

1. Sing "I am the Way"
2. "Who am I?" Charades. Choose different jobs/ careers and have kids act them out in charades style. Let the whole group guess what job is being acted out. At the end, have a kid act out Jesus. Use this last charade to bridge to the theme of the day. Say: "Jesus is our Savior, his job or mission here on earth was to save us from sin, and he is the way, the truth, and the life."
3. Have them repeat the memory verse: "St. John 14:6. Jesus said, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."
4. Sing "Rock, Sword, Shield"
   - *He's my rock, my sword, my shield. He's the hub in the middle of the wheel. He's the lily of the valley, he's my bright and shining star. Makes no difference what you say, I'll get on my knees and pray. I'll keep singing 'til the day my Jesus comes! Yee-haw! (Repeat the song, still doing the motions, but take out the words of one line and insert the silly sounds. Check google drive video for details.)*
5. Family Hub Time:

a. Sit in your family hub knee-to-knee circle.

b. Have each kid talk about their highs and lows for the day.

c. Ask: What is something really crazy you can do, or about you that no one would believe is real? (Counselors should share too!)

d. Pray for each kid by name

Day 2: The Way of Prayer

Main Idea: Jesus prays, we pray too.

Main Bible passage: Matthew 6:5-13, Luke 11:1

Opening Devotion

1. Song/ Gathering ideas- Cast your burdens

- *Chorus: Cast your burdens… (4 claps) unto Jesus (4 claps), for he cares (4 claps) for you (4 claps). (Repeat)*

  Lower, lower, lower (x3), stomp Satan lower. (Move lower to the floor and stomp) (Repeat)

  Higher, higher, higher (x3) lift Jesus higher. (See how high you can reach!) (Repeat)

  Chorus

2. Review: Who remembers what we learned yesterday?

3. Give the main point: Today we are learning that Jesus prayed, and we pray too. So, what is prayer? (Talking to God) When do you pray? What prayers do you use? Where do you pray? Did you know that Jesus prayed too?

4. Read Scripture: Read Mark 1:35- Jesus goes alone to a "desolate place" to pray.

5. Reflect on scripture: Jesus, who is God's son, the way, the truth, and the life, prayed to his Father in a desolate place, which means on his own, out of the way from any distractions.

    1. Skit: one leader pretending to talk to a beloved friend on the phone (things like "I'm so glad I get to talk to you today" "yeh I was a bit worried about that, what do you think?" "You're right, that's the best way to do that." "I love it when we go fishing together"), other leaders come in part of the way to interrupt the conversation (someone be the "TV" breaking into news reports or silly commercials, someone be "siri" who is trying to remind the person of all the things on his calendar today, someone be a video game reminding them to keep playing or they'll lose their streak, someone be a family member or dog wanting their attention). End the skit with the counselor on the phone turning off the "distractions" and ending the conversation with the friend on a positive note: "so glad we could talk to day. I love it when we can talk. Thanks for listening. You're such a good friend. Talk to you tomorrow!"

    2. Process the skit/ bring it back to the point: talking to God in prayer is like talking to a friend on the phone. But praying can be hard when there are distractions like TV or other things. No matter what distractions we may have, God is always listening when we pray. Jesus often prayed alone, and he taught his disciples how and when to pray and he also taught his disciples a very special way to pray. It's called the Lord's prayer and we still pray this prayer today!

6. Closing prayer: Lord God, thank you for being our best friend who always listens when we pray. Help us today to learn more about you and to come to you in prayer for all things! In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

7. Family Hub Time:

    a. Sit in your family hub knee-to-knee circle.

    b. Tell kids the schedule for the day and assign jobs (line leader, bag holder, door holder, caboose, etc.)

    c. Have each child share something they enjoy doing with a friend.

Day 2: Bible Hub Time

1. Opening question: Today we are talking about Jesus prays, and how we pray too. What's one thing we've already learned about prayer? (Can pray alone without distractions, prayer is talking to God like talking to a friend, God always hears us when we pray!)

    1. Activity: Decode secret messages!

        1. For older children: Before Bible hub, make scripture cards by writing the following scripture references about prayer on a small white index card with *white crayon or wax crayon*. Make some "fake" cards by drawing pictures or writing silly phrases on extra index cards in the same *white crayon or wax crayon*.

        2. For younger children: Before Bible hub, make similar scripture cards by writing key words from these bible passages on the small white index cards with *white crayon or wax crayon*. Similarly, make "fake" cards with words that are not biblical.

- Proverbs 15:8
- 1 Thessalonians 5:17
- Romans 12:12
- 1 John 5:14-15
- Colossians 4:2
- Philippians 4:6
- 2 Chronicles 7:14

        3. Place the scripture cards and "fake" cards all around the room. Hide them as well as your family hub can handle, depending on their age. Show them an example of what to look for (index card).

        4. Once all the secret messages are found, explain that they will have to decode the secret message by coloring over it with a regular marker. Be sure there are enough secret messages for every child. (The marker will color the paper but not the white crayon and reveal the secret message.)

        5. Have them sort the secret messages that are from the Bible and ones that are from you.

6. Then, for older kids have them look up the Bible verses. For younger kids, look them up yourself and read them. Talk about what each bible verse says about prayer. Emphasize that we talk to God through prayer, that it doesn't need to be fancy, but that God loves us so much he wants to hear from us and talk to us!

2. Main idea and Bible reading- Say, "Now we are going to read the very special prayer that Jesus taught his disciples." Read Matthew 6:5-13 (the Lord's prayer).

3. Discussion of main idea: Where have you heard this prayer? (In church, in worship!) We use this very special prayer that Jesus taught his disciples and that he teaches us through his Word, the Bible, in worship. What do we call this prayer? (The Lord's Prayer) So we pray without distractions and with sincere hearts, knowing we are talking to God himself like a friend! And we know God is listening.

- Younger kids: Have the kids make a booklet by cutting out the Lord's prayer squares and stapling them in order (website link here: https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&url=https%3A%2F%2Fopenclipart.org%2Fdetail%2F296070%2Flords-prayer-coloring-page&psig=AOvVaw0bH2XMGttEm1z-YLJ_UvvR&ust=1699101954187000&source=images&cd=vfe&opi=89978449&ved=0CBEQjRxqFwoTCKiYv5Tup4IDFQAAAAAdAAAAABAE). Then let kids color each page as you talk about each petition.
- Older kids: Have them make a booklet out of paper and draw their own picture/ symbol for each part of the Lord's prayer as you discuss each part.
- "Our Father who art in heaven"- we pray to God who is our Father in heaven, he is the best father ever and it's amazing that we can call the creator of the universe our Father, our Dad! *(Draw a picture/ symbol or color it for this part)*
- "Hallowed be thy name"- hallowed means holy! God's name is holy, there is no one like our God! *(Draw a picture/ symbol or color it for this part)*
- "Thy kingdom come"- we want God's kingdom to come! The kingdom where Jesus is king, no one else *(Draw a picture/ symbol or color it for this part)*
- "Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."- Let God's will/ his plans/ his peace be done here on earth and in my life, as it is in heaven. *(Draw a picture/ symbol or color it for this part)*

- "Give us this day our daily bread"- give us all we need to live in this life- bread and food, clothes, water, (all the things we NEED to live) *(Draw a picture/ symbol or color it for this part)*
- "And forgive us our trespasses/ sins/ debts, as we forgive those who sin against us"- we ask God to forgive us when we mess up, to not hold it against us. In the same way, we forgive those who sin against us, or mess up with us, who do wrong against us. *(Draw a picture/ symbol or color it for this part)*
- "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."- we pray that God will save us from evil, and help us to choose the right way, even when it's hard. *(Draw a picture/ symbol or color it for this part)*
- And this last part isn't in the Bible, but early Christians added it on as an ending to this prayer- "For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen."- All the power and glory belongs to God forever, more time than we can understand. God has always been and will always be! *(Draw a picture/ symbol or color it for this part)*

4. Extra Activities (as you have time)

Sign language Lord's prayer: look up the ASL version of Lord's prayer on YouTube and practice it together! Challenge your group to lead this during an opening or closing devotion!

5. Closing prayer/ activity: Prayer Walk

Prayer walk- like a scavenger hunt, but when you find the item/ person, you pray for them or the situation the item reminds you about. Counselors- pray out loud first, then ask a kid to pray out loud! You can go in any order, but save your Family Hub for last.

- *Volunteers or helpers*- thank the volunteers for being here and then pray and thank God for their willingness to serve
- *Wheelchair or other medical supplies*- talk about those in your life that are sick and need healing and then pray for those that need healing
- *Pastor or church worker*- thank them for doing all they do and then pray for them as they teach and lead others
- *Big Bible like on a pulpit or lectern*- talk about people in other places of the world that may not know Jesus or even have their own bible. Then pray for them!
- *Food*- pray for those who don't have enough food to eat, that we would be inspired to give generously to those in need

- *Picture of Jesus and/ or a cross*- tell God how wonderful he is and how thankful you are that he is your savior
- *The altar rail*- kneel and confess your sins to God and ask for his forgiveness, knowing you will receive it! *Consider having silent prayer here.*
- *Outside in nature*- talk about your favorite parts of God's creation, including your pets and animals. Then pray and thank God for creating us and our world. Ask God to help us care for all the animals and plants!
- (Save for last) *Your family hub*- take turns saying something nice about each person, then the leader prays for each kid in the family hub by name and thanks God for bringing them together.

Day 2: Games

Telephone charades for older kids- ask for 3-4 volunteers who are willing to act. Send these kids to another room with a leader. The remaining kids then choose a person/ character, a place, and an action. The leader should try and direct kids to something that will be easy to act out but also funny. The person, place, and action do not have to go together. For example, you might choose an astronaut, on a boat, cooking dinner. Once you have chosen, bring in 1 kid from the other room, and tell them what the person, place, and action is. Then bring in the 2nd kid, and the first kid acts out the person, place, and action for the 2nd kid. Then the 2nd kid acts out what they saw for the 3rd kid, and so on until there is only one kid left. The last kid tries to guess what is being acted out, but it may not be correct. If needed, bring in the first kid to act out the person, place, and action again.

Telephone for younger kids- sit in a circle or line, and the leader whispers something silly or a tongue twister to the child next to them only one time, then this child passes it on to the next child, and so forth to the last person in line. The last person then says out loud what he heard. Many times the message has been distorted and it's now extra funny.

Connection to theme: In this game, you didn't always talk directly to the person who started the message, so it didn't turn out how it was meant. But in prayer, we can talk directly to God, and through his Word, the Bible, we know what God says is what he means.

Day 2: Crafts

Prayer candle- decorate plastic cup with colored tissue paper using modge podge and then put a tea light inside it! "Light" your candle and use it when you pray!

Day 2: Closing Devotion

1. Opening Song- When we worship God
    - *(Start squatting or sitting, then do the motions as you sing) When we worship God, we do more than sing. When we praise his name, we do everything. That's why we stand up, sit down, stand again, and clap our hands. Shout loud, stomp our feet, turn around, and take a bow. Sway! Then we sit back down. (Sing it multiple times, speeding up each time)*
2. Thank you for singing that song! When we worship God, we also do what we talked about today…. We pray! What did you learn about prayer today? Jesus prayed to God his father, and we pray too, to connect to God, our father, our friend, our savior. We pray, knowing God hears us and will answer, and we pray because it's good for us to talk to God and to be connected to him- because he gives us everything we need!
3. Did you know that Jesus prayed for his disciples and he prays for us? Read John 17:11b, 15.
4. Close with the Lord's prayer, and if a group volunteers, have them lead it with motions or ASL.

5. Family Hub Time:

    e. Sit in your family hub knee-to-knee circle.

    f. Have each kid talk about their highs and lows for the day.

    g. Ask: Tell me about a time when you know God heard your prayer. (Leaders should share one first.) Then, where would you like to take your prayer candle to pray to God?

    h. Pray for each kid by name

Day 3: The Way of Compassion

Main Idea: Jesus shows compassion, we show compassion too.

Main Bible Passage: Luke 7:11-17

Day 3: Opening Devotion

1. Welcome and Song- "Hippo Song" (teach the song and sing it through 3 times. Sing it really softly, then loudly, or slower then faster. Have fun with it!)

    In the beginning God made the seas

    And the forest filled with trees

    He made the mountains up so high

    Above it all He placed the sky

    God's fingerprints are everywhere

    *Just to show how much He **cares***

    But in between He had lots of fun

    He made a hippo who weighs a ton

Hip hip hip hippopotamus Hip hip hooray, ***God made all of us*** *(x2)*

2. Process the Song
    a. Ask questions: What is your favorite part of this song?
    b. Share: Share something silly about the song you like then say: "I also like how this song reminds us that God created all of us, and continues to *care* about us. God certainly cares about all of his people. Now, **another word for care is compassion**- *and it means to have a desire to help someone in need*. So today we're going to learn about how God's son, Jesus, shows *compassion* to people in need and how we too can show compassion. When Jesus walked the earth he was compassionate to all kinds of people- young, old and even sometimes those who didn't like him very much. Jesus sets the example for us to follow. **He shows us the way of compassion**. Having compassion like Jesus is not only good for people in need, but it's good for us too. Now let's learn a bible verse from Colossians 3:12 about compassion.
3. Bible Verse- Colossians 3:12
    a. Read the verse this way: *"Put on then, as God's chosen ones… compassionate hearts…"*
    b. Have them repeat it after you, then say it together.
4. Pray: Loving God, you care for the whole world you have made. Thank you for caring for us so much that you would send Jesus to die on the cross for us. Help us to learn your way of compassion. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.
5. Family Hub time:
    a. Sit in your family hub knee-to-knee circle.
    b. Tell kids the schedule for the day and assign jobs (line leader, bag holder, door holder, caboose, etc.)
    c. Have each child take turns sharing about someone who cares for them, or has shown them compassion.

Day 3: Bible Hub Time

1. Opening Activity: Make faces! Read each expression and have each kid make faces (correct facial expressions for the emotions) for the below situations, and then ask everyone what emotion they are expressing.
    a. When you find out there's no more cookies
    b. When your birthday is only 2 days away!
    c. When someone doesn't play by the rules
    d. When your sports team wins!
    e. When your sports team doesn't win
    f. When your friend doesn't want to play with you at recess
    g. When someone you love is sick and you want to do something about it! (This is compassion and care!)
2. Main Bible lesson and discussion
    a. Say: "This morning we said we were going to learn about how Jesus shows compassion, and shows us how we too can have compassion."
    b. Our bible story today is from the Gospel of Luke: Luke 7:11-17. (If your family hub can handle it, try acting out this story using these parts: narrator to read, Jesus, 2 disciples, dead man, mother)
        i. "Soon afterward he went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a great crowd went with him. **12** As he drew near to the gate of the town, behold, a man who had died was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow, and a considerable crowd from the town was with her. **13** And when the Lord *saw her*, he had *compassion* on her and said to her, "Do not weep." **14** Then he came up and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." **15** And the dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. **16** Fear seized them all, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has arisen among us!" and "God has visited his people!" **17** And this report about him spread through the whole of Judea and all the surrounding country.
    c. Discussion questions

i. Why do you think a great crowd was following Jesus? (v.11)

ii. What was happening as Jesus entered the town? (v.12)

iii. Who did Jesus have *compassion* for? (vv. 12-13)

iv. How was Jesus *compassionate*? (vv.13-14)

1. Noticed her sadness- she was crying and sad about her son and Jesus went to her.
2. Uses his power to raise her son back to life.

v. How is Jesus *compassionate* to us?

1. Knows when we are sad and in need. We can pray to him when we are sad or in need.
2. Promises us eternal life even after we die.
3. Share an age appropriate story from your experience about a time Jesus was compassionate to you through the compassion of someone else

vi. How can we be *compassionate* like Jesus?

1. Clarify the obvious- we can't raise people from the dead
2. Focus on how Jesus <u>*notices*</u> her crying and desires to help her
    a. We can be compassionate like Jesus by *noticing* when others may be sad or in need and doing our best to help them.
3. Ask: When have you seen someone sad or in need? How did you show them compassion like Jesus?
4. Ask: Think about what people need in your family, school, or community. How could you show compassion at school? How could you show compassion at church? How could you show compassion at home or with your family?
5. Ask: When you have shown compassion to someone in need, how does it make you feel? Showing compassion, desiring to help someone truly in need, makes us feel

good, because it's *the Jesus Way,* it's the right thing to do.

3. Recite the memory verse: *"Put on then, as God's chosen ones… compassionate hearts…"*
4. "Compassion" Role Play- have kids choose one of the below statements to role play. Do one for them as an example. What would you say to this person? How would you show compassion to them like Jesus shows compassion? *For younger kids- you may have to choose one child to act it out with you, the leader. *For older kids- put them in groups of 2-3 to act these out together.
    a. You are playing with friends at recess. You notice one person alone who seems sad.
    b. Your mom is working hard to get dinner on the table.
    c. Someone fell down and hurt themselves.
    d. Your sister is sick.
    e. Dad just came home from work, and it's been a hard day.
    f. You hear of another child who isn't going to get any presents for Christmas because her parents can't afford it.
    g. You notice a homeless person as you walk through the city.
    h. Your friend is over at your house for the first time and really wants to play with your favorite toy.
    i. You notice a person on crutches struggling to open a door.
    j. A friend of yours had their pet dog die.

5. Extra Activities
    a. Older kids: Show compassion and care to each other by writing positive affirmations and good things about this person on a piece of paper. Have them write their name at the top of the paper, place it on the table, then give everyone a writing utensil and let them walk around to write nice things they see in each person on their paper. Give them ideas like: You are kind, you are talented at _____, I like

how you are friends with everyone, your smile lights up the room, etc. Put these in their craft bags.

b. For younger kids: Make sidewalk chalk art. Encourage creativity. Ask campers to draw hearts, crosses, or other symbols of compassion where church members will see, but also in a place the church allows. Kids can write kids "Alleluia!" or some other phrase like "Jesus loves you!"

c. "Put on compassion" service project- ask your church coordinator if they have a prayer list and use paper and markers to create cards for those on the church's prayer list. Or simply make generic "Jesus loves you" cards to give to the pastor or coordinator to hand out.

d. For Older Kids: Get bibles and do a "Compassion" word study. Teach these kids to find Bible verses if they need help. Then divide kids into two equal groups (with someone who can look up verses well in each group) and make it a race to look up each Bible verse and read it aloud. These verses use the word "compassion" in the ESV (English Standard Version). It may be different in other translations. Consider discovering which word is used instead of "compassion" in these other versions!

    i. Psalm 103:13

    ii. Isaiah 49:13-15

    iii. Isaiah 54:7-10

    iv. Lamentations 3:32

    v. Micah 7:19

    vi. Mark 6:34

    vii. Luke 15:20

    viii. Romans 9:15

6. Close in Prayer

Day 3: Games

"Put on compassion" relay race- Gather several large pieces of clothing that would fit over every child. Divide kids into two teams. To win- each person on the team must "put on" the clothes before the other team. On "go," the first child puts on the clothes, then runs to the designated point, and returns to his team where he takes the clothes off, and gives to the second person on the team. Play continues until all kids have "put on" the clothes.

Connect: Jesus had compassion on the widow and on many other people. We too, can "put on" compassion as Jesus did, and share his love with others. In some ways, putting on compassion is like putting on clothes! When we wake up each day and get dressed, we can remember that we are "clothed" with Jesus and his compassion and can look for opportunities to show compassion each day.

Day 3: Crafts

For Younger Kids: "Put on compassion" activity/ craft- using large brown paper bags, cut out holes in the top and sides, and cut up the middle so that it could fit on a child like a button-up shirt. OR if real shirts are an option, buy large shirts for each child to decorate with permanent parkers. Have each child decorate their "shirt" with ways they can show compassion like Jesus, then *put it on! (*Ideas include: being kind to a friend, giving a hug to someone who is sad, donating food to a food bank, making cards, listening to someone, etc.) Take pictures of them and perhaps have a parade where the campers show off their "shirts" to the older kids, volunteers, church workers, etc.

"Jesus loves me to pieces" craft- Have kids choose a piece of construction paper and write "Jesus loves me to pieces!" Or help them write it and draw a heart. Allow them to cut up small pieces of paper or tissue paper and using a glue stick, glue them inside the heart. Be sure they write their name on the bottom!

Paper Doll Chain- Fold paper accordion style and then trace one of the patterns for paper dolls on one side. Cut it out then see how you have several "people"

holding hands. Have kids decorate each person differently, and remember how we can have compassion for all God's people just as Jesus has compassion on us.

How to make a paper doll chain: https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwiq9OP0vqWCAxVPg2oFHfm0AP8QwqsBegQIIhAG&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.youtube.com%2Fwatch%3Fv%3D3xX5npCOOTQ&usg=AOvVaw1NYqjmMauCkl3DycA2q9oO&opi=89978449

Day 3: Closing Devotion

1. Perform Skit: "Love Ball"
    - One person is playing with a "love ball." When another person comes up to him and asks to play along, the person who owns the ball refuses. The ball becomes smaller (the actor acts out the ball becoming smaller). More people come in one at a time to ask if they can play along with the love ball, and the owner refuses until the love ball disappears. In the next scene, another person owns a love ball and is tossing it, when another person comes to ask if they can play along. This owner says yes, and they begin tossing the love ball, noticing (and acting out) that it grows larger. More people come in asking to play and each time more people play, the love ball grows larger. The person who owned the first love ball comes back on stage last, asking to play, and this person is welcomed in playing with the love ball. The love ball grows so large as they are tossing it, that the end is to "toss it" into the audience. Kids will LOVE this part and they are pretending right along with you and will throw their hands in the air to receive the love ball!
2. Process Skit: What happened in this skit? (The ball got smaller when no one was allowed to play with it, but got bigger when more people were invited to share in playing.) How is this skit like God's love for us? (God's love in Jesus is meant to be shared. God loves us so much that he sent his son Jesus to die on the cross for us, and that love is so amazing we have to share it with everyone, just like we shared the love ball.)
3. Review the theme for the day: What was our theme for the day? Jesus shows compassion, and we too can show compassion.
4. Recite memory verse again: "Put on then, as God's chosen ones… compassionate hearts…"

- If the younger kids did a paper bag “shirt”- let them do a “fashion show” and show off their paper bag “shirts.”

5. Closing song: “Cast your burdens”

6. Family Hub Time:

   a. Sit in your family hub knee-to-knee circle.

   b. Have each kid talk about their highs and lows for the day.

   c. Ask a question: If you had 1 million dollars (a huge amount of money), what would you do with the money? (This question is for fun, but encourage them to consider being *compassionate* with some of it!)

   d. Pray for each kid by name

Day 4: The Way of Giving

Main Idea: Jesus gives, we give too.

Main Bible Passage: John 6:1-14

Day 4: Opening Devotion

1. Fun Skit Option: “Wee” hiking skit

- Have at least 4-5 counselors participate in this skit. The group is hiking in line, with one person clearly the leader and one at the very back. Act out hiking a mountain, going around obstacles by walking around your space. The person at the back asks the person in front of them if they can go “wee,” and this person passes it up to the next person, and so forth until it gets to the leader in front. This person then passes the phrase “no, you can’t wee yet!” back to the person behind them, and each pass the message back to the person at the back. This back and forth goes on at least two times, until the last time, the leader says “Yes, you can go “wee!” The tag is that the person in the very back goes “wee” by yelling “wee!” and running around freely or jumps on the front leader’s back for a piggy back ride yelling “wee!”

2. Song: "I've got so much to be thankful for!" Ask kids what they are thankful for to include in the song- "What has Jesus given you that you are thankful for?

   Chorus: *I've got so much, so much, so much, so much, so much, so much, so much, so much, so much, so much, so much, so much, so much, to be thankful for. (x 2)*

   I've got Jesus… to be thankful for. (4 claps) I've got Jesus….to be thankful for. (4 claps)

   repeat chorus

   I've got Day Camp/ bible school… to be thankful for. (4 claps) I've got Day Camp/ bible school to be thankful for. (4 claps)

   verses can be anything the kids name they are thankful for!

   end on the Chorus

3. Review and talk about theme: What have we learned so far this week? (Take answers!) Today's theme is Jesus gives, and we can give too. Jesus gives us what we need, and because of that, we can give to others what they need.

4. Ask: "How long does it take someone to make supper for you? (Take answers) What about for a big party…how long would it take someone to make dinner for a big group? Imagine feeding all those people; now imagine five thousand men plus women and children to feed. How long would it take you to make them supper? Having enough food is a big deal, isn't it?" Then bring out a small bag of goldfish (or whatever small snack you have) with only enough for 1 person. (You could choose to start eating it in front of the kids, and wait for their reactions/ asking for some!) Ask: "Is this bag big enough for everyone to eat lunch, or even a snack? No! But today, we're going to read a bible lesson about how Jesus uses just a little bit of fish and bread (hold up the small bag of goldfish/ snack) and made a miracle so that he could give enough food to over 5000 people!"

5. Read memory verse and have kids recite it with you: 1 Timothy 6:17b: "Tell them to have faith in God, who is rich and blesses us (*gives us)* with everything we need to enjoy life."

6. Pray: Before beginning prayer, tell kids there will be a time when they can shout out the things they are thankful for during the prayer. God our Father, we are so thankful to you for all the many ways you give to us and bless us. Thank you for these things: (let kids name things they are thankful for). Help

us to have a wonderful day learning about you. In Jesus' holy name we pray. Amen.

7. Family Hub time:
    a. Sit in your family hub knee-to-knee circle.
    b. Tell kids the schedule for the day and assign jobs (line leader, bag holder, door holder, caboose, etc.)
    c. Have each child take turns sharing about their favorite food they would want to eat on a picnic.

Day 4: Bible Hub Time

1. Opening Activity: Take your family hub for a "hike" and hike around the church in any safe way possible, inside or outside. Pretend you're going up on a mountain or down in the valley, and make it fun! End the "hike" wherever you will lead Bible Hub Time. (You can take up to 10 minutes to do this.)

2. Main Bible lesson and discussion
    1. Set the story by saying: Today's Bible story takes place on a mountain! That's why we went on that hike today! Jesus and his disciples hiked up to a mountain where they sat down together, when they saw a large crowd of people coming to them. These people saw the miracles Jesus was performing and wanted to see him!
    2. Ask for kid volunteers to read the three disciple parts and the Jesus part of the following script. The other kids act as "the crowd" and do what the others say. Consider making a pretend "fish" and "bread" out of paper, or use snacks that represent fish and bread, and having a picture of 12 baskets.

Disciple 1: It's the end of the day.
Disciple 2: Send the crowd away.
Disciple 3: Yes, so they may go into the surrounding villages and find a place to stay for the night.
Disciple 1: They also need to get something to eat.
Disciple 2: This is such a desolate place.
Jesus: You give them something to eat!
Disciple 3: There is a boy here who has his lunch with him, 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish.
Disciple 1: Unless you want us to go and buy food for all of these people.

Disciple 2: There are about 5,000 men!
Jesus: Have them sit down to eat in groups of about fifty each.
(Disciples act like they are grouping the people and then everyone sits down)
Jesus to disciple: Bring me the 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish.
(Disciple 3 does this)
Jesus (looking up to heaven): Thank you Father for this food that you have provided for us.
(Jesus breaks the bread and hands them to the disciples)
Jesus (to disciples): Go bring the food to all of the people.
(Everyone eats and are full)
Jesus (to disciples): Go and pick up all of the pieces that are left over.
Disciple 3: Let's go. This shouldn't take long.
(Disciples go and pick up "food")
Disciple 1: Wow! There are 12 baskets full!
Disciple 2: That's more than when we began.
Disciple 3: We have witnessed a miracle by the Son of God!

3. Discuss the Bible story.

- What did Jesus do in this bible story? (He made 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish turn into enough to feed over 5000 people, he performed a miracle that only God could do! He took a little and made it a lot!)
- How is this an example of Jesus giving to his people? (He gave them food that they needed, he provides for us!)
- How does Jesus give to us? (Let them name all the things and people God gives them!). Jesus also gives us his very body and blood in our communion meal we receive usually on Sunday mornings with our church family. He gives of himself, so that we can tell others how wonderful he is, just like the people on the mountain the day of this miracle! Jesus is the way. He shows us the way of giving!

3. Extra activities

- For older children: Have students do an audio or video recording on your phone, as if they were interviewing people who were at this Bible event, a kind of "You were there" style interview. Questions might be: ask the boy who gave his lunch to Jesus: "What was it like to give your fish-and-bread lunch to Jesus?"; ask a "crowd" member "What did it feel like to be hungry before Jesus made a miracle?" "What did it feel like to be full after the miracle?"; ask a disciple: "What were you thinking when Jesus said he would feed the people with so little?" And "What do you know now about Jesus,

after seeing this miracle?" (For this last question, you are looking for them to realize that they can trust Jesus to give them what they need!). Then listen to or watch your video together. Consider showing it at closing devotion if possible.

- For younger children: Make a poster/ large paper with two sides- 'Jesus gives us' and 'we give to others.' Have kids write or draw all the things Jesus gives us. On the other side, have kids think of ways they can give to others (donating to food bank, giving up old toys and clothes they don't need, giving smiles and friendship to those who need it, etc.). *If you have access to magazines, kids could flip through these and cut out things Jesus gives them.
- Create a new blessing for meals! Jesus gave thanks to God for the food that day when he fed the 5000. That means he prayed a blessing, a prayer! Then, talk about the meal prayers/ blessings each child uses at home. Have campers write a new blessing to be used at Day Camp, whether that be a poem, song, or say-back prayer.
- If your church gives food to a food pantry, let the pastor or another church leader talk about how and why they do that. Take the kids to see the place where food is put to be donated, if possible. Make small notes saying "Jesus loves you and he'll give you what you need" and tape these notes to the boxes or canned goods that are being donated to a food pantry.

Day 4: Crafts

Five loaves and 2 fishes Basket- Cut out a semi-circle in two paper plates so that the plates look like a basket. Color the paper plates with brown crayon to look like a basket. Staple the plates together on the bottom and sides. You could choose to give kids actual snacks to put in the basket, or decorate bread and fish cut-outs to put in the basket. https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.pinterest.com%2Fpin%2F678002918883507956%2F&psig=AOvVaw2gsawyLg3RCvbq8NMEr8-3&ust=1699104977692000&source=images&cd=vfe&opi=89978449&ved=0CBEQjRxqFwoTCOiRirb5p4IDFQAAAAAdAAAAABAE

Day 4: Games

Scavenger hunt: Find or count out 50 (or 100, or 500, whatever you think your group can do) of the same kind of thing. Maybe this is beads, crosses, goldfish, rocks, etc. Talk about how much more 5000 is!

- Using the handouts "Food they had BEFORE Jesus...", help kids realize how many people 5000 people would be. Talk about the kinds of places 5000+ people would fit: stadium, not our church building, not your school, etc. Ask them where they may have been that could hold 5000 or more people. You could even try counting to 5000- or just to 100 and tell them they would have to count to 100 fifty times to get to that number! Connect this to how amazing it is that Jesus could provide enough food for everyone with just 5 pieces of bread and 2 fish.
    - Handout from https://ministry-to-children.com/jesus-feeds-the-5000-visuals/

For older kids: "I'm going on a picnic" game. The leader starts by saying "I'm going on a picnic, and I'm taking _____(Food they want to take)." The key to this game is meant to be discovered, so the leader should help kids figure out what they will take on the picnic. You can make the key whatever you want, but it could be that the following person takes something that begins with the last letter of the item the person before them takes. For example: The leader says, "I'm going on a picnic and I'm taking bread."The last letter of this item is 'd' so the next person would need to take an item that begins with 'd'. The leader would help kids figure out they could take "dill pickles" or something else that begins with the letter 'd'. And so on.

Connect to the theme: Remind kids that Jesus fed over 5000 people with 5 loaves and 2 fish, the simple picnic meal of one boy who was willing to offer his picnic lunch to Jesus.

Day 4: Closing Devotion

*Consider having this closing devotion in the sanctuary, so that you can take kids to the altar to discuss Holy Communion.

1. Gathering Song: Making Melodies

- *Making melodies in my heart (x3), to the King of Kings.* (Add on motions after each time singing: thumbs up, elbows out, knees bent, toes together, head back, tongue out)

2. Review the day: Who can tell me what we learned about Jesus today? We learned that Jesus gives to us, he fed over 5000 people that day with just a little bit of food, he made a miracle, and he still gives to us, feeds us, makes miracles for us today! Because he gives to us, we can give to others.

3. Have family hubs take turns sharing their poster from Bible time (on how Jesus gives to us and how we give to others). Or family hubs could share their video recording.

4. Recite memory verse: 1 Timothy 6:17: Tell them to have faith in God, who is rich and blesses us (*gives us)* with everything we need to enjoy life."

5. Take kids to the altar, where we celebrate Holy Communion. (Be sensitive to the fact that some children probably don't receive communion yet, and some may not be Lutheran.) Talk about how Jesus is present in the bread and wine, giving of himself. Say something like: Jesus gives us himself here, in the bread and wine. It's a miracle and mystery. When Jesus fed the 5000 that day long ago, he showed the people that he would always give them what they needed. Then, he said he was the bread of life! He is all we need. In our communion meal, Jesus continues to give us himself, all we need! *You could ask the pastor to help you with this if they're available.

6. Family Hub Time:

   a. Sit in your family hub knee-to-knee circle.

   b. Have each kid talk about their highs and lows for the day.

   c. Ask: Have any of you seen God perform a miracle? Something only God can do? (Counselor should share something appropriate from their life.). Remind children that each Sunday we receive Holy Communion is the miracle of himself that God gives us.

   d. Pray for each child by name, considering their highs and lows for the day.

Day 5: The Way of Forgiveness

Main Idea: Jesus forgives, we forgive too.

Main Bible Passage: Luke 23:32-43

Day 5: Opening Devotion

1. Sing a favorite song from the week.

2. Opening Skit: "Sin Chair"

   - One leader is walking by and sees a chair with the word "Sin" written on it, and decides to sit in it. When they try to get up, they find that they're stuck and can't get up. Other leaders come by and try to help this person up, but get stuck to the chair too (in funny ways). The last person who comes by does not get stuck, because they offer to pray to ask God for forgiveness, since they're stuck on a sin chair.

3. Process the skit: What kind of chair were they sitting in? Why couldn't they get up? (Stuck in sin! Just like we are stuck in sin without Jesus.) Nothing worked to get them out of the chair, nothing but what? (Prayer, asking God to forgive them of their sins.)

4. Introduce today's theme: Today's bible lesson is about how Jesus forgives us of our sin, and how we can forgive others when they sin against us.

5. Read Bible verse: 1 John 1:8-9, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

   1. Where have you heard this verse before? (In worship, we use this for our confession and forgiveness)

   2. We are all sinners, and we need to confess our sins to God, because we know he will forgive us for all the wrong things we do, because he is faithful!

6. Another way we forgive others during our worship service is to share God's peace with others. What do we do during worship to share God's peace with each other? (We shake hands or say "God's peace"). This is a way we can share God's peace, but also show forgiveness to those in our church that we need to forgive, or to ask for forgiveness! We can forgive because Jesus forgives us!

1. Share the peace! Practice sharing the peace (shaking hands and saying “God’s peace be with you.”)

7. Pray: Dear Jesus, we know we are sinners, and we are sorry for the ways we have sinned against you. Thank you for forgiving us. In your name we pray. Amen.

8. Family Hub time:

   a. Sit in your family hub knee-to-knee circle.

   b. Tell kids the schedule for the day and assign jobs (line leader, bag holder, door holder, caboose, etc.)

   c. Have each child take turns sharing about a time they either shared God’s peace in church, or a time they have felt peaceful.

Day 5: Bible Hub Time

1. Opening Activity- “Cross” hunt in the church- Take pictures using a leader’s phone of crosses you find, both the kind that are already made and the kind you may find in shadows, sticks, people, etc. Challenge them to find 10 crosses (or make 10). Be creative. Show these pictures to the whole group at snack time.

2. Main Bible lesson and discussion

   1. Transition from activity by saying: Why do you think we did a cross hunt today when our theme is Jesus forgives? How did Jesus forgive us of our sin? (By dying on the cross, taking on our sins and dying in our place so that we could have forever life.)

   2. Let’s read the Bible passage for today. Luke 23:32-43. (You can always ask a child to read if you have older kids that you know are capable. You can also consider having parts: Narrator, Jesus, “the leaders”, the soldiers, 1st criminal, 2nd criminal)

Two criminals were led out to be put to death with Jesus. When the soldiers came to the place called “The Skull,” they nailed Jesus to a cross. They also nailed the two criminals to crosses, one on each side of Jesus.
Jesus said, “Father, forgive these people! They don't know what they're doing.” While the crowd stood there watching Jesus, the soldiers gambled for his clothes. The leaders insulted him by saying, “He saved others. Now he should save himself, if he really is God's chosen Messiah!”

The soldiers made fun of Jesus and brought him some wine. They said, “If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself!” Above him was a sign that said, “This is the King of the Jews.” One of the criminals hanging there also insulted Jesus by saying, “Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and save us!” But the other criminal told the first one off, “Don't you fear God? Aren't you getting the same punishment as this man? We got what was coming to us, but he didn't do anything wrong.” Then he said to Jesus, “Remember me when you come into your kingdom!” Jesus replied, “I promise that today you will be with me in paradise.”

3. Ask questions about the reading.
    - What is this Bible lesson about? (Recap the Bible story in their own words)
    - How does Jesus show forgiveness? (Really there are two ways: vs. 34-35- “Father forgive these people.” And forgiving the criminal on the cross who realized he had done wrong and asked to be remembered when Jesus comes into his kingdom.)
    - Could you forgive the people who were putting you to death, putting you on a cross? (No, probably not). But Jesus can forgive them and does. And he forgives you and I for all the wrong things we’ve ever done.
    - What are some ways we sin, do wrong? (Let them name some sins they may have committed or general things we do to go against God’s commands)
    - So we are sinners, just like those who put Jesus to death on the cross and just like that criminal on the cross who asked for forgiveness. We need Jesus to forgive us when we sin and mess up!
4. Object Lesson: Conduct this object lesson to help kids see that Jesus forgives us. Using a clear plastic tray or dry erase board, write the word “sin” on it in permanent marker. Say something like: We all sin, do wrong things against God, and even though we try not to sin, we continue to sin, we continue to mess up. We are stuck in sin, and we can’t live forever in heaven with God as sinners because God is perfect and sinless. (Show how you can’t wipe off the “sin” with your finger or paper towel). We need help. We need a savior who can take away our sin, forgive us when we mess up, and help us to move on in life to love and serve the Lord. We need a savior who will forgive us forever. (Using a dry erase red marker, mark over the word “sin” entirely, and perhaps even make a cross design with the dry erase marker). When Jesus died on the cross that day, he took on all our sin, and when he died, the power of sin died. By the blood of Jesus, our sins are forgiven! When Jesus rose back to life on the third day, he made the way for us to live with him forever in heaven. Jesus is THE WAY! Jesus forgives us on the cross, so that we can forgive others. (Erase the “sin” with a paper towel and it will completely erase!)

- Have each child write or draw ways they have sinned with permanent marker on a small strip of dry erase paper (3 inches or so) OR you can have them take turns doing this on the dry erase board or clear tray you used. Let them try the object lesson by covering over the permanent marker "sin" with dry erase red marker and then wiping it away.
- Finish talking about the object lesson: When you were baptized, God washed away your sin and promised you life forever with him. Because we have been forgiven by Jesus, we can (and should!) forgive others when they sin against us.

5. Extra activities

    1. Forgiveness Role Play- Because Jesus died on the cross to forgive us of sin, we too can forgive others! Have campers role play these scenarios, to show apology/ repentance and forgiveness in each situation. Teach phrases like, "I'm sorry that I _____." And then "Thank you for apologizing. I forgive you."

        - Two siblings are arguing when one destroys the other's toy on purpose
        - Your mom or dad ask you to clean your room but you don't and instead play games on the iPad
        - Your friend at school doesn't play with you at recess and it makes you sad
        - You tell your parents you made a good grade on the test, when you really made an F!
        - You and your friend are hanging out and you use bad words and take God's name in vain, and your mom overhears!

6. Closing Activity

- Read the Bible memory verse from opening devotion again. 1 John 1:8-9, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Remember, we know we are sinners, but we also know that God will forgive us when we ask.
- Then pray, asking God to forgive us and to help us to forgive others!

Day 5: Crafts

Painter's tape cross- put down painter's tape on a canvas board in the shape of a cross. Paint around the cross with any colors or design you like. When done, pull off the painter's tape to reveal the cross. Remember that through the cross of Jesus, we are forgiven!

Foam stand-up crosses to decorate with gems and other foam pieces- kids could write on it in marker "Jesus is the Way" or "The Jesus Way." Sample foam-stand up cross: https://www.orientaltrading.com/religious-easter-crosses-with-stickers-bible-craft-kit-makes-24-a2-57_2134.fltr?keyword=foam+crosses

Day 5: Games

Church "Treasure Hunt"

Choose the clues you want to use and put them in an order that make sense, numbering them. Try to make it so that the last clue leads to the pulpit bible or a significant cross. Hide the clues in the correct order and put some kind of prize at the end. Remember, if doing this with multiple family hubs, you will need extra copies of the clues, or ask each family hub to leave the clues in place, and space out when the family hubs go through the treasure hunt. Feel free to write your own clues!

Connect to the theme: the greatest treasure is Jesus, who died on the cross for us!

- Wanting more? Why don't you check the front door? (Front door/ main entrance to church)
- Hickory dickory dock. The mouse ran up the ——! (Clock)
- You're a wonderful kid, from your head to your toes. Look at the spot where smelly trash goes. (Garbage Can)
- I make it possible to have fresh food. Everyone agrees I'm one cool dude. (Refrigerator)
- I'm not a selfie, but I do show faces. Find me in bathrooms and a few other places. (Mirror)

- I've got buttons and numbers, and can give things a zap. I'm here to warm and heat up your snacks. (Microwave)
- I am the way, Jesus said, now look for where the word of God is read. (Pulpit or lectern bible)
- Making this isn't as easy as pie, but you'll see it in worship held high. (Banner)
- Here with wine and bread, with Jesus you'll be fed. (Altar)
- Learning about Jesus with kids here is oh so fun, they read, play, and get crafts done (Classroom)
- We come to worship for a bit, and here is where we sit. (Pew)
- Here we build friendship, and also fellowship! (Fellowship hall)
- Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses to this and they spread, not all are this color but his were red (church sanctuary door)
- You might say it's heaven sent, the secretary uses it to print (Copier)
- You'll find this symbol everywhere, it's the ultimate way we know God cares (Cross)

Day 5: Closing Devotion

1. Sing "I am the way" and any other favorite songs of the week.

2. Have kids stand in a large group circle. Ask them to share their favorite part of the whole week. Then ask what they learned about "The Jesus Way" this week.

3. Emphasize how much you have enjoyed the week and any other highlights the leaders had for the week. Thank the campers for being awesome!

4. Say: At the beginning of the week, we looked at who Jesus is, and we read this passage from John 14:6 "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." Jesus is our Savior; he is the way, the truth, and the life. As our Savior and the way to eternal life in heaven, we can follow his example: his way of praying, his way of compassion, his way of giving, his way of forgiveness. I hope you will remember that Jesus loves you and wants you to follow his way, "The Jesus Way."

5. Hold hands in a big circle to pray. Consider using "squeeze prayer" (pray, then squeeze the next person's hand so they can pray) or "popcorn prayer" (one person starts, then anyone may pray, before a leader decides to close the prayer). Pray!

Supplemental Scripts:

Day 3 Reading: Jesus has compassion

Narrator 1: Soon afterward he went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a great crowd went with him. As he drew near to the gate of the town, behold, a man who had died was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow, and a considerable crowd from the town was with her. And when the Lord *saw her*, he had *compassion* on her and said to her

Jesus: "Do not weep."

Narrator 2: Then he came up and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said

Jesus: "Young man, I say to you, arise."

Narrator 2: And the dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. Fear seized them all, and they glorified God, saying,

Crowd 1: "A great prophet has arisen among us!"

Crowd 2: "God has visited his people!"

Narrator 3: And this report about him spread through the whole of Judea and all the surrounding country.

Day 4 Reading: Jesus feeds the 5000

Disciple 1: It's the end of the day.

Disciple 2: Send the crowd away.

Disciple 3: Yes, so they may go into the surrounding villages and find a place to stay for the night.

Disciple 1: They also need to get something to eat.

Disciple 2: This is such a desolate place.

Jesus: You give them something to eat!

Disciple 3: There is a boy here who has his lunch with him, 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish.

Disciple 1: Unless you want us to go and buy food for all of these people.

Disciple 2: There are about 5,000 men!

Jesus: Have them sit down to eat in groups of about fifty each.

(Disciples act like they are grouping the people and then everyone sits down)

Jesus to disciple: Bring me the 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish.

(Disciple 3 does this)

Jesus (looking up to heaven): Thank you Father for this food that you have provided for us.

(Jesus breaks the bread and hands them to the disciples)

Jesus (to disciples): Go bring the food to all of the people.

(Everyone eats and are full)

Jesus (to disciples): Go and pick up all of the pieces that are left over.

Disciple 3: Let's go. This shouldn't take long.

(Disciples go and pick up "food")

Disciple 1: Wow! There are 12 baskets full!

Disciple 2: That's more than when we began.

Disciple 3: We have witnessed a miracle by the Son of God!

<u>Day 5 Reading: Jesus forgives</u>

Narrator: Two criminals were led out to be put to death with Jesus. When the soldiers came to the place called "The Skull," they nailed Jesus to a cross. They also nailed the two criminals to crosses, one on each side of Jesus.
Jesus said

Jesus: "Father, forgive these people! They don't know what they're doing."

Narrator: While the crowd stood there watching Jesus, the soldiers gambled for his clothes. The leaders insulted him by saying

The leaders: "He saved others. Now he should save himself, if he really is God's chosen Messiah!"

Narrator: The soldiers made fun of Jesus and brought him some wine. They said

The Soldiers: “If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself!”

Narrator: Above him was a sign that said, “This is the King of the Jews.”
One of the criminals hanging there also insulted Jesus by saying

First Criminal: “Aren’t you the Messiah? Save yourself and save us!”

Narrator: But the other criminal told the first one off

Second Criminal: “Don’t you fear God? Aren't you getting the same punishment as this man? We got what was coming to us, but he didn't do anything wrong.”

Narrator: Then he said to Jesus

Second Criminal: “Remember me when you come into your kingdom!”

Narrator: Jesus replied

Jesus: “I promise that today you will be with me in paradise.”