



### Tips for three-year-olds

- They are beginning to be able to think more creatively to solve problems.
- They need opportunities to make their own choices and to “do it myself.”

### Into the Wilderness Matthew 4:1–11

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

### In the Wilderness

(based on Matthew 4:1–11)

*(Encourage children to do the actions or repeat each sound in the story after they hear it.)*

It was early in the morning. Up in the trees, birds were singing. *Tweet, tweet, tweet!* Outside the house, a dog barked. *Woof, woof, woof!* In the carpenter’s shop, a man hammered some nails into wood. *Bang, bang, bang.*

Outside, women were getting water from the well. *Splish, splash.*

Jesus liked to hear all these sounds, but one morning he need a quiet place to think. So Jesus walked down the path, past the birds in the trees, and the dog, and the carpenter, and the women at the well. Jesus kept walking until he got to a very quiet place.

No birds were singing.  
No one was hammering.  
No one was talking.  
There were no people and the only sound Jesus heard was the quiet whispering of the wind. *Oo-ooo-ooo.*

*(Speak quietly.)* Jesus stayed out in that quiet place for a very long, long time.

Jesus thought a lot about what God wanted him to do.  
Jesus knew that God was with him.  
Jesus knew what God wanted him to do.  
And Jesus knew he could say “no” when he needed to.

Soon Jesus was ready to go back to the noisy, busy village. Jesus knew that God was with him in the village, just as God had been with him in the quiet place.  
And God is with us, too!

### Optional activity after the story

**Game** Invite children to imagine that they are following Jesus into the quiet place. Walk around the meeting space as if walking along a path. Climb over and crawl around imaginary rocks. Climb up an imaginary mountain. Stop

and sit down together for a few quiet moments. Then repeat the journey out of the quiet place.

Participate in the Lenten calendar activity.

### Respond

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

- Lenten calendar** Prepare calendars ahead of time, so children can just colour and add a footprint.
- Wilderness collage** Make a sample collage for children to use as a guide.



**Tips for three-year-olds**

- They are beginning to learn how to think more creatively.
- They have vivid imaginations.

**Through the Night  
John 3:1-17**

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

**A Nighttime Visit**

(based on John 3:1-17)

*(Create a “room” with masking tape or yarn and gather inside with the children.)*

Jesus smiled. “Well, Nicodemus, what do you want to know?”

One night, when it was getting dark, a man named Nicodemus walked to the house where Jesus was staying. *(Invite children to slap their thighs to make sounds of footsteps.)* When Nicodemus reached the door, he could see Jesus sitting inside.

Nicodemus took a deep breath and began to ask Jesus about all sorts of things. And Jesus answered every question. Sometimes Jesus asked Nicodemus questions, too. Jesus and Nicodemus talked and talked and talked. Jesus said to Nicodemus, “I want to show God’s love to everyone. You can show God’s love to everyone, too!”

“Nicodemus, my friend,” said Jesus, “please come in and sit down.” *(Gesture with your hand.)*

Soon it was time for Nicodemus to go home. *(Slap thighs to make sounds of footsteps and then stop.)*

Nicodemus hurried to sit beside Jesus. “Jesus, I know that you are a teacher of God’s love,” Nicodemus said. “I have so many questions to ask you! I would like to learn more about what it means to live in God’s way.”

There would always be so much more to learn about God’s love from this wonderful teacher named Jesus. But, for now, Nicodemus knew that he would try to show God’s love every day, every way, and to everyone!

**Optional activity after the story**

*(Lead the children in the following chant and participate in the Lenten calendar activity.)*

**Leader:** When can we show God’s love?

**Children:** Every day!

**Leader:** How can we show God’s love?

**Children:** In every way!

**Leader:** To whom can we show God’s love?

**Children:** To everyone!

**Respond**

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

**Montage** Pre-cut a variety of magazine pictures of people.

**Spinner** Prepare the plastic lids ahead of time, inviting children to decorate the heart shapes and help them attach these.



**Tips for three-year-olds**

- They are beginning to initiate conversations and enjoy sharing their “news.”
- They are beginning to have friendships.

**With Thirst for New Life  
John 4:5–42**

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

**Come and See!**

(based on John 4:5–42)

*(Put a shawl or scarf over your head and place a bucket with a rope attached and a large jar nearby.)*

“Who are you?” I asked.

Hi, children! I have come to a well to get some water for my family. It’s hard work. First I have to put the bucket down deep into the well. Then I have to lift it out and pour the water into my jar. *(Invite children to imitate pulling up a bucket of water and pouring into a jar.)*

The man told me his name was Jesus. He began to talk about God and God’s love. “God loves and cares for everyone,” Jesus said. “You are very important to God.” I could tell that Jesus was a one of God’s special teachers. He was so kind! Jesus told me many things about myself, things that only I know. I thought to myself, “Jesus really knows who I am!”

One afternoon, when I was going to the well, it was very, very hot. *(Wipe brow or fan self.)*

I began to feel God’s love all around me.

I noticed that someone was sitting by the well. I didn’t know who he was but I could tell he wasn’t from my village. The man looked at me, smiled, and said, “Could you please give me a drink of water? I’m thirsty and I don’t have a cup.”

Way up high *(stretch arms high)*,  
way down low *(crouch)*,

I was surprised that he talked to me, but I was happy to share my cup with him. I gave him a drink of water and then we sat down and talked together.

and deep, deep inside me *(tightly hug self)*.

I was so happy that I wanted to share this good news. I left my jar by the well and ran all the way back to the town. I told everyone, “Come and see! Come and see Jesus!”

**Optional activity after the story**

Participate in the art engagement and the Lenten calendar activity.

**Respond**

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

- Activity sheet** Provide the construction and tissue paper pieces.
- Message cards** Glue the figures into the cards, inviting children to decorate them.



**Tips for three-year-olds**

- They share their love easily with others.
- They feel empathy when someone is hurt or ill.

**After Vision Shifts  
John 9:1–41**

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

**Every Day!**

(based on John 9:1–41)

One day, Jesus and his friends saw a blind person sitting by the side of the road. A blind person is someone who cannot see. (*Encourage children to close their eyes.*)

This man could not see the green trees or the yellow sun or the blue sky. He could feel his mother’s face when she kissed him, but he could not see what she looked like. He could feel his father’s prickly beard and strong arms when he hugged him, but he could not see his striped robe.

But he could hear. And one day he heard someone walking along the road. It was Jesus, and the blind man could hear Jesus’ friends talking to Jesus about him!

Suddenly, the man felt Jesus spread a little mud on his eyes. (*Touch each child on the eyelids.*) The mud felt cool and wet! Then Jesus said, “Go and wash off the mud in the pool.”

The man knelt down at the pool and washed his eyelids until they were clean again. (*Pretend to wash off mud.*) When he opened his eyes he could see!

He could see the trees, and the sun, and his house – and Jesus! The man could also see some surprised faces. Some people wondered why Jesus would heal someone on that day, which was a day to worship God. They thought that Jesus should heal on another day!

But Jesus said, “God’s love is for today and every day!” (*Clap for each day.*) Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday.

**Optional activity after the story**

Participate in the game and the Lenten calendar activity.

**Respond**

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

- Care cards** Prepare cards by printing a short greeting inside; help children add their names.
- Door hanger** Make only a few holes so that there won’t be much “sewing” involved.
- Placemats** Make a sample.



**Tips for three-year-olds**

- They often feel emotions acutely.
- They enjoy dramatic play.

**Out of the Depths**  
John 11:1–45

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

**Jesus Cries**  
(based on John 11:1–45)

*(Sit in a circle. Nearby, place the basket with four toy figures for Mary, Martha, Lazarus, and*

*Jesus, and a strip of white cloth.)*

Lazarus and his sisters, Martha and Mary, were special friends of Jesus. *(Place figures for Lazarus, Martha, and Mary in the middle of the circle.)*

One day, Lazarus became very, very sick. *(Lay Lazarus down.)* Mary and Martha sent a message for their dear friend Jesus to come and help. They waited and waited. They wondered where Jesus was. “Why is Jesus taking so long?”

Lazarus got sicker and then he died. Everyone cried. They wrapped Lazarus in a clean white cloth and buried him in a cave. *(Wrap white cloth strip around Lazarus figure, covering it completely.)*

Finally, Jesus arrived. *(Place Jesus near Mary and Martha.)* When Jesus heard the news he was very sad, too. He put his arms around Martha and Mary and cried with them. Then Jesus did a surprising thing. Jesus went to the cave where Lazarus was buried. Jesus prayed, “Please, God, hear me.”

Then Jesus called out, “Lazarus, come out!” *(Pause.)* And suddenly Lazarus was alive again! *(Unwrap the figure and place beside the others.)*

Everyone cried again. But this time it was happy tears. Martha said to everyone, “I knew Jesus would help us!”

**Optional activity after the story**

**Puppet play** Use a puppet to help children talk about sad times. Invite them to imagine some sad things that might happen to the puppet, and how they might help. Participate in the Lenten calendar activity.



**NOTE:** There are no supplemental materials for April 2 and April 9 as these sessions are designed for all ages.

**Respond**

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

- Story booklet** Prepare booklets ahead of time, gluing in pictures for children to decorate.
- Heart window** Make a sample.
- Friendship chains** Help children print the names of friends on the figures.



**Tips for three-year-olds**

- ❑ They need to participate fully in an event using all their senses in order to realize what has happened.
- ❑ They may be hearing the Easter story for the first time. Marvel and celebrate with them.

**Resurrection Witness**  
**John 20:19–31**

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

**Thomas Is Amazed**

(based on John 20:19–31)

*(Practice these emotions with the children. Then, encourage them to show those emotions during the story.)*

Thomas was one of Jesus’ friends. Thomas wasn’t in the room that day and he was still very **sad**.  
“Thomas,” the friends said. “We saw Jesus!”  
But Thomas said, “I don’t believe you. I want to see Jesus. Then I will know that Jesus is still with us.”

**Sad:** hang heads and pretend to wipe tears away.

**Amazed:** wiggle hands in the air and make a surprised face.

The next week, all the friends were in the same room again, including Thomas. Suddenly, Jesus was there too. Everyone was **amazed**.

Jesus’ friends were **sad** because they thought they would never see Jesus again. Suddenly, Jesus appeared in the room with them. The friends were **amazed**. Jesus was alive!

Jesus said to Thomas, “Touch my hands. I’m really here.” Thomas was **amazed**. Then Jesus turned to everyone and said, “My love will always be with you.”

Jesus said to the friends, “Peace be with you.”

Jesus’ friends had so much to say to Jesus. They talked and talked to Jesus. Then Jesus went away.

**Optional activity after the story**

**Finger play “All Together Now”**

Here are Jesus’ friends (*wiggle fingers of right hand*),  
all together now.  
They see Jesus (*right hand shades eyes*),  
all together now.  
Here comes Thomas (*wiggle pointer finger of left hand*),  
he’s coming now.  
Thomas sees Jesus (*left hand shades eyes*),  
all together now (*clasp hands together*).

**Respond**

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

- ❑ **Megaphone** Option: use disposable paper cups (cut out the bottom from each cup) for children to decorate with self-adhesive stickers and markers.
- ❑ **Rubbings** Many children will need help to completely reveal the butterflies. After they have coloured for a while, invite them to watch as you complete the rubbings.
- ❑ **Messages** Send envelopes home with the children instead, to give to their parents at a mealtime.



**Tips for three-year-olds**

- They can become involved in imagined scenarios.
- The emphasis in the session will be on the recognition of Jesus by his two friends, not on his disappearance.

**Eyes of the Heart**  
**Luke 24:13–35**

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

**Jesus Is with Us**

(based on Luke 24:13–35)

*(Beforehand, set a loaf of bread on a table and create a “road” with yarn in the area that leads to the table. Travel along “the road” stopping periodically to tell part of the story.)*

One day, two people were walking along a road. They were going to a town called Emmaus. They were very sad because their dear friend, Jesus, had died. They missed him very much.

Soon, a man came to walk beside them. As they all walked together, the man asked, “Why are you sad?” The two friends said, “Our good friend Jesus has died. We miss him so much.”

As they walked down the road together, the man told the

two friends many stories about God. And the two friends listened and listened. When they arrived in the town of Emmaus, the two friends said, “Please come to our house and stay with us.” *(Sit around the table.)*

When they sat at the table, their guest took the bread, said a prayer and broke the bread just like Jesus used to do. *(Break the bread into pieces.)* Suddenly the two friends knew this was Jesus! *(Share the bread.)*

The two friends were so excited they had to tell everyone the good news. They didn’t care that it was almost dark. They didn’t care that they had just walked a long way. They jumped up from the table and ran out. “Alleluia! Alleluia! Jesus is still with us,” they shouted to everyone who would listen.

**Optional activity after the story**

**Game** “Where is Jesus?” (tune: “Frère Jacques” or “Are You Sleeping?”)

*(Invite children to repeat each phrase after you.)*

Where is Jesus? Where is Jesus?

Here he is, here he is. *(Have children jump up and down.)*

Jesus loves and cares for us.

Jesus loves and cares for us.

Allelu! Allelu!

**Respond**

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

- Signed message** Option: teach the sign for “alleluia.” Then say, “Jesus is with us,” and have the children respond with the hand sign for “alleluia.”
- Marble paintings** Use large marbles and have children use one at a time.
- Puppets** Help children draw faces on their puppets.



**Tips for three-year-olds**

- ❑ Their concept of “church” is concrete, seeing it as a building rather than a community.
- ❑ They appreciate being able to make contributions to community living.

**Sensing Awe  
Acts 2:42–47**

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

**An Early Christian Community**

(based on Acts 2:42–47)

*(Place the image of the village home from poster Storytelling Resources #2 where all can see it.*

*Have cups of water, bowl of yoghurt, honey, and basket with pieces of pita bread nearby.)*

The people in the very first Christian churches loved Jesus very much. They always tried to love others just as Jesus did. If people were hot and tired, they would give them a drink of water.

**Activity** Distribute cups of water. When finished drinking, collect the cups and put aside.

They went to the temple to worship God. They loved to sing songs about God’s love.

**Sing** “Alleluia” (*tune: “Frère Jacques” or “Are You Sleeping?”*)

Alleluia, Alleluia,  
God is love. God is love.  
Wave our hands with joy.  
Wave our hands with joy.  
God is love. God is love.

After they prayed in the temple, they would meet in each other’s homes, like this one (*point to illustration*), and share a meal together. They remembered how Jesus shared meals with his friends, too.

**Activity** Say a prayer together. Add some honey to a bowl of yoghurt and demonstrate how to dip pita bread into the yoghurt.

They were always happy to be together, to help each other, and share everything they had. Soon more and more people wanted to join the church and learn how to love God and live like Jesus did.

**Optional activity after the story**

*(Lead children in the bolded response, clapping for each syllable.)*

- Chant** We can sing to God, **just like Jesus did.**  
 We can pray to God, **just like Jesus did.**  
 We can share with others, **just like Jesus did.**  
 We can eat together, **just like Jesus did.**  
 We can care for others, **just like Jesus did.**

**Respond**

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

- ❑ **Church card** Help children to spread out the pictures in front of them. Describe a picture and encourage children to find that image. When all pictures have been described, distribute sheets of construction paper and invite them to glue all the pictures on the paper (in whatever order they wish).
- ❑ **Community banner** Stretching the cloth very tightly will make it easier for the children to decorate it.
- ❑ **Headband** Rather than sharing their figures with each other, give each child the same number of figures as children in the group. Help them to tape these to their headbands and put a name to each figure.





**Tips for three-year-olds**

- ❑ They are beginning to initiate conversations, and can relate personal experiences to others.
- ❑ They learn best by seeing and modelling the behaviour of others.

**Embolded to Proclaim Acts 7:55–60**

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

**Stephen, a Faithful Helper**

(based on Acts 7:55–60)

*(Place the image of the village home from poster Storytelling Resources #2 where all can see it.*

*Have cups of water and the basket with the four helping items nearby.)*

The people in the first Christian churches loved Jesus very much. They always tried to love others just as Jesus did. They would give drinks of water to people who were hot and thirsty.

**Activity** Pour cups of water for children to share with each other.

More and more people wanted to join the churches. They wanted to sing together, pray together, and share every-

thing together. Soon there were so many people that it was hard to give everyone their fair share. The church needed helpers. Stephen was one of the helpers. He showed God’s love by helping people who were sad or hungry or sick.

**Activity** *(Spread out the four helping items on the floor. Encourage children to point to an item or offer an answer for each question.)* Here are some of the things that Stephen might have taken with him to help people.

- If someone was hungry, what might Stephen do?
- If someone was cold, what might Stephen do?
- If someone had no money, what might Stephen do?
- If someone had a cut, what might Stephen do?

**Optional activity after the story**

**Chant** “Hands Are for Clapping”

*(March around the room and clap on the numbers.)*

Our hands are for clapping, 1-2-3, don’t you see!

Our hands are for sharing, 1-2-3, don’t you see!

To God we are thankful, you and me, 1-2-3!”

*(Repeat, replacing “sharing” with words such as loving, praying, helping.)*

**Respond**

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

- ❑ **Activity** Remind them to squeeze the sponges each time they are dipped in water.
- ❑ **Helping hands** Rather than making booklets, trace their hands and feet on single sheets of construction paper, printed with the heading, “My hands and feet can help.” Decorate with crayons or markers.
- ❑ **Our church** If you have access to small toy people figures, invite children to play with their assembled churches by naming and filling the church with people they know.



### Tips for three-year-olds

- They love to exercise their growing independence.
- They often still like to have a particular “security” item when tired or away from home.

#### To See Is to Love John 14:15–21

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

### Jesus’ Comforting Words

(based on John 14:15–21)

*(Place the image of the village home from poster Storytelling Resources #2 where all can see it.)*

*Have jug of water and cups, scroll, and tray of snacks nearby.)*

The people in the first Christian churches loved Jesus very much. They always tried to love and help other people, like offering a cup of cool water to people who were hot and thirsty.

**Activity** Pour cups of water for children to share with each other.

More and more people joined the churches to sing and pray together, and to share everything together. They knew Jesus prayed to God, too. And they knew that God listened when they prayed.

**Activity** Invite children to close their eyes as you offer this prayer;

Dear God,  
your love is all around us.

Thank you for *(encourage children to contribute their ideas)*.

Amen.

Sometimes they read stories about Jesus from scrolls.

**Activity** Invite a child to carry the scroll over to you. Open it and read the words:

Jesus says, “Don’t be afraid. You will never be alone.  
My love will always be with you.

God’s love will always be with you.”

After they had prayed they often shared food together.

**Activity** Bring out a tray and share the food.

### Optional activity after the story

**Action poem** “God loves you”

God loves you *(point to children)*,

God loves me *(point to self)*,

Jesus shows God’s love you see *(form heart shape with arms over head)*.

I love you *(point to children)*,

you love me *(point to self)*,

God’s love is here for all to see *(form heart shape with arms over head)*.

### Respond

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

**Locketts** Eliminate the optional beading.

**Painting** Print a simpler version on the children’s squares: “God is always with me.”



**Tips for three-year-olds**

- They need appreciation for contributions to community living.
- They are learning that the church community is a place where they are loved.

**Sensory Glory**  
John 17:1–11

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

**A Prayer from Jesus**

(based on John 17:1–11)

*(Hold the figure of Jesus as you tell the story.)*

Jesus looked around at all his friends. Jesus knew that soon he would not be with them because he was going to be with God. Let's imagine that we are there with Jesus. Let's imagine that Jesus is smiling at us and saying our names. *(Move figure of Jesus toward each child as you say the name of that child.)*

Jesus loved his friends so much! He knew his friends were anxious about what would happen to them when he was gone. So Jesus said a special prayer for his friends. *(Encourage children to close their eyes and listen to Jesus' prayer.)*

Loving God,  
please take good care of my friends.  
Keep them safe in the morning,  
at noontime, and at night.  
Help my friends to know how to live in your way,  
and how to share your love with others. Amen.

*(Ask the children to open their eyes.)*

Jesus' friends listened as Jesus prayed to God. Then they knew that God would always be with them, even when Jesus wasn't with them anymore.

**Optional activity after the story**

**Sing** "Loving God" (tune: "London Bridge")

Loving God, we pray to you,  
pray to you, pray to you,  
and we pray for others, too.  
O God, we love you!

**Respond**

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

- Prayer plaque** Help children print their names.
- Mural** Have each child place a hand on the sheet of mural paper and trace around it. Ask them to name something they would like to pray for and print this within their hand shapes.
- Prayer pockets** Give each child three or four strips of paper and print on these the names of people they wish to pray for (such as parents, grandparents, friends).

**NOTE:** There is no supplemental material for May 28 as this session is designed for all ages.