



Welcome to

# Workshop Zone



I'm delighted that you've chosen Workshop Zone® Rotation Curriculum to help you plant seeds of discipleship in the lives of children. Workshop Zone®'s unique approach to teaching God's Word provides kids with faith-building experiences designed to build a strong Biblical foundation for their walk with Christ. Exploring God's truth through storytelling, art, drama, video, science, games and other mind-stimulating activities allows kids to learn the way God made them to learn—utilizing all the pathways he's built into their minds and hearts.

I've written this program over the last several years as part of the ministry to the children I serve at Christ Church of Oakbrook. It's been wonderful to see our children (and, surprisingly, the adult volunteers who teach them) develop a real-life understanding of what it means to know Jesus and be his disciple. These are the goals we've set for this ministry, the goals that form the foundation of Workshop Zone®.

## **Kids will**

- ★ confess Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.
- ★ celebrate who God is as they worship.
- ★ commit to following Christ's example with their behavior and attitudes.
- ★ convey the love of God in their relationships and interactions with the world.
- ★ cultivate their prayer voice.
- ★ catalyze change in the world by becoming "missions-minded."
- ★ connect with God's Word as their instruction manual for life.
- ★ contribute to the Body of Christ through their time, gifts and talents.





# Yearly Themes



Each year of Workshop Zone® is organized around a theme that focuses on key Bible stories through a specific “lens” of faith. This year, the Year of Grace, explores the lives of faith heroes of the Bible. As kids unwrap these God-breathed stories week after week, they’ll discover that God, their “Abba,” uses faithful people to bring about his kingdom today, just as he did long ago.

*There are nine four-week units in the Year of Grace.*



- 1** The Tabernacle: God’s Kindergarten of Grace
- 2** Mephibosheth: The King’s Table of Grace
- 3** Elijah: Strengthened by Grace
- 4** Christmas: God’s Gift of Grace
- 5** Jonah: Reluctant Prophet of Grace
- 6** The Prodigal Son: Parables of Grace
- 7** Easter: Amazing Grace
- 8** Disciples of Grace
- 9** The Body of Christ: Vessels of Grace

While we recommend using the units in this order, you may choose to create a different sequence for your church.





# Eight Complete Workshops

Each monthlong unit contains eight complete workshops—four for 2nd and 3rd graders and four for 4th and 5th graders. The various workshops approach the Bible story through different storytelling methods and activities that match, stretch and celebrate the different ways kids learn.

## *The workshops in each unit include:*



### **GOOD SHEPHERD INN**

Kids settle into a cozy atmosphere and enjoy a Bible storyteller drama, then make and munch a yummy snack that ties in to the story.



### **SALT AND LIGHT SHOP**

Science and nature exploration lead to wonderful discoveries about our Creator and the stories he gives us to live by.



### **MOUNTAIN TOP PRODUCTIONS**

The tantalizing smell of popcorn welcomes kids to this workshop where they view and analyze clips that expand the scope of the Bible story.



### **FAITH IN MOTION**

Here's a chance to get rowdy with lively games that challenge kids to recall and relate to important points of the story.



### **SEASIDE STUDIO**

For the artist in every child! Kids create personal artistic expressions of their spiritual growth and response to the Bible story.



### **STARGAZER THEATER**

Let kids be the stars! This workshop sets the stage for Bible study through all kinds of performing arts—puppets, music and drama.



### **TEMPLE COURT**

With a focus on spiritual formation, kids openly explore and express their growing faith with real-life responses.

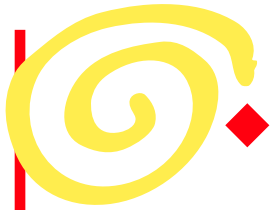


### **BIBLE GAME ZONE**

Put those growing minds to the test with an interactive Bible story review followed by fun and fascinating game shows such as Holy Word Squares, Bible Jeopardy, Who Wants to Be a Bible Scholar and more!



During one four-week unit, the 2nd and 3rd graders attend four workshops while the 4th and 5th graders attend the other four. If you follow the units in the recommended order, the age levels will swap workshops in the next unit. So, over a two-month, two-unit period, kids from both age levels will be able to enjoy all eight workshops.



# Setting Up Your Rotation Schedule



You can adapt Workshop Zone® to churches of nearly every size and physical situation. You, the kids, their parents and all of the servants who are part of this adventure will discover the life-giving renewal that God generates through this gift-based ministry to children. Let's take a look at how Workshop Zone® can work in your ministry setting.

If you have eight rooms or separate areas available, you're all set. Your rotation schedule will look like this for Unit Six, The Prodigal Son: Parables of Grace.

|            | <b>Sunday # 1</b> | <b>Sunday # 2</b> | <b>Sunday # 3</b>       | <b>Sunday # 4</b>   |
|------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Grades 2-3 | Faith in Motion   | Stargazer Theater | Good Shepherd Inn       | Salt and Light Shop |
| Grades 4-5 | Temple Court      | Seaside Studio    | Mountaintop Productions | Game Zone           |

If you teach the units in the recommended order, the age levels will switch workshops the next month, so your rotation will look like this.

|            | <b>Sunday # 1</b> | <b>Sunday # 2</b> | <b>Sunday # 3</b>       | <b>Sunday # 4</b>   |
|------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Grades 2-3 | Temple Court      | Seaside Studio    | Mountaintop Productions | Game Zone           |
| Grades 4-5 | Faith in Motion   | Stargazer Theater | Good Shepherd Inn       | Salt and Light Shop |



# Christmas: The Gift of Grace

## Workshop Bible Game Zone

Grades 4-5



### Workshop Overview

*What You'll Do, What You'll Need*

◆ **Scripture Source**  
*Matthew 1—2; Luke 1—2; John 1:1-18*

◆ **Set the Course**  
*When we trust in Jesus as our Savior, we accept God's gift of grace to us.*



◆ **Bible Verse**  
*"Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord."  
Luke 2:10-11*



**1.** Play the game "Clue of Christmas."  
\_\_\_ self-stick tags

**2.** Tell the legend of the Christmas tree.

**3.** Decorate a themed Christmas tree to display in the children's ministry area.  
*Note: Each week the children in this workshop will decorate a different tree.*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| ___ supplies for one of the trees listed on pp. 6-8:<br>Snowy Woods, Frosty the Tree Man, Sounds of Christmas or Christmas Kaleidoscope | ___ plates, napkins<br>___ cups<br>___ Christmas cookies<br>___ water or milk<br>___ CD player<br>___ Christmas CD |
|---|--|

**4.** End your class with the forgiveness tree meditation  
\_\_\_ box and lid wrapped separately in Christmas paper  
\_\_\_ 2-inch unpainted wooden cross ornaments, available from craft stores or from the Woodworks catalog, 1-800-722-0311. You may want to drill holes in the tops of the crosses so kids can add yarn or ribbon hangers.



# Workshop Objectives

## LEARNING TASKS

**Kids will:**

- ★ **play the icebreaker game *Clues of Christmas* and think about the trappings of Christmas.**  
(knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis; Verbal/Linguistic, Logical, Interpersonal, Bodily/Kinesthetic)
- ★ **hear the legend of the Christmas tree.**  
(knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis; Verbal/Linguistic)
- ★ **create a class tree to be displayed in the Children's Ministry area.**  
(knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis; Verbal/Linguistic, Visual)
- ★ **participate in a final meditation about God's gift of grace.**  
(knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation; Verbal/Linguistic, Visual)

## SPIRITUAL FORMATION



**Kids will:**

- ★ **understand the awesome reality that Jesus was the almighty God of the universe who humbly came to earth in human flesh to seek and save the lost.**  
(knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis)
- ★ **understand that Jesus had a human mother so he could identify with our humanity and a divine Father so he could live a sinless life and make the perfect sacrifice for our sins.**  
(knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis)
- ★ **understand that Mary was favored because God chose her for his perfect plan.**  
(knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis)
- ★ **understand that God granted grace to Joseph by sending an angel with guidance and by allowing Joseph the privilege of bringing up God's own Son.**  
(knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis)
- ★ **understand that anyone can accept God's grace by trusting in Jesus as their Savior.**  
(knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis)

Year of Grace



The Gift of Grace

## Personal Preparation



Year of Grace

Christmas:  
The Gift of  
Grace

Matthew 1—2;  
Luke 1—2;  
John 1:1-18



*“Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.”*

*Luke 2:10-11*

# From God's Heart to Yours

**R**ead Matthew 1—2, Luke 1—2 and John 1:1-18.

Over 2,000 years ago God sent the world a matchless gift of grace. Jesus left heaven to embrace frail humanity. The mighty Son of God who spoke the world into being at the dawn of time, now entered his world as a tiny, fragile infant. When the Word was made flesh, Mary tenderly cleaned him and bound him in soft cloth. Then she laid God's gift to the world in a feeding trough filled with sweet hay. The baby boy's first cry split history in two and announced a new day and a new way to the Father.

God first made this plan known to a teenage girl in an obscure village. The consequences of pregnancy outside marriage were daunting. When Gabriel told Mary that she was “highly favored,” she must have been overwhelmed. Mary knew she had done nothing to deserve God's favor. But, confronted with the full impact of being chosen to bear the Son of God, Mary humbly accepted the astounding gift of grace God offered.

Joseph, too, accepted his role in this holy drama—though at the time it probably seemed much more like a trial than a gracious gift. Setting aside the opinions of men, he obeyed the voice of God and took Mary as his wife.

Then there were the shepherds. Poor, uneducated and insignificant in the eyes of the world, they represented the very antithesis of the pharisaic ideal of earning God's favor through good works, appearance and status. Yet God extended them the honor of an angelic announcement and invitation to witness and bear witness to the birth of his Son. Can you imagine? Unto *you* a child is born!

Do you remember when you first believed? As you open the Scripture to these familiar passages, ask God to rekindle that wondrous moment. Visit the stable once again. Feel the chill of the night. Breathe in the earthy scents. Step quietly forward. Open your heart to the precious gift God sent to the world. In the quiet holiness of the moment, acknowledge anew that God freely offers his grace, not because of anything you have done—simply because he loves you.



# 1 Clues of Christmas

Write the following Christmas words and phrases on self-stick tags: ornaments, lights, tinsel, garland, angels, Santa Claus, presents, artificial snow, tree skirt, candy canes, glass balls, snowmen, a star for the top, nativity, jingle bells, cookies, three wise men, Christmas carols, Mary and Joseph, Jesus, decorations, shepherds, parties, Bethlehem, celebration.

Gather the kids in a circle around you.

**This is my favorite time of year. How about you—don't you just love everything about Christmas?**

To kick off our class today, we're going to play a game called "Clues of Christmas." I'm going to put a sticker on everyone's back. Everyone will be able to see what it says but you. You will ask each other yes or no questions until you guess what is on your back. You can only ask the same person two questions before you have to move on to someone else. Got it? Let's begin.

Ask the shepherds to help you put the stickers on the kids' backs. When all the kids have stickers, they can start asking each other yes/no questions to guess what their stickers say. Make sure they ask only two questions of each classmate, then move on to someone else.

When all the kids have guessed what was on their stickers, have them gather in a circle.

★ **What did all of the words on our backs have in common?** They were all about Christmas.

I'm going to read some of the clues that were on your backs. Listen carefully and tell me if you can think of an even closer connection: ornaments, lights, tinsel, garland, angels, presents, artificial snow, tree skirt, candy canes, glass balls, snowmen, a star for the top.

★ **What's the connection?** They all have to do with Christmas trees.

★ **How many of you put up a Christmas tree at your house?**

There's something very special about a Christmas tree. It symbolizes many of the things we do at Christmas. Did you know that the Christmas tree can also be a symbol of our faith? You're going to be amazed at what we learn about Christmas and Christmas trees today!



# 2

## The Legend of the Christmas Tree

There are lots of different versions of how the tradition of the Christmas tree began. Many historians believe that the tradition began in the eleventh century in Germany with a play called “The Paradise Tree.” There wasn’t much in the way of scenery or props when the play was performed. In fact, there was only one prop. The center of the stage held a fir tree covered with apples.

★ Can you think of a place where the Bible mentions a tree that’s covered with apples? In the Garden of Eden.

In that ancient play, the paradise tree represented the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil in the Garden of Eden. Remember? God told Adam and Eve not to eat the fruit of that tree, but they did. When they disobeyed God, sin came into the world. Adam and Eve had to leave the beautiful garden.

The play, “The Paradise Tree,” ended by telling of God’s promise to send a Savior who would fix what Adam and Eve had messed up in the Garden of Eden. This play was often performed during Advent, the time leading up to the celebration of the birth of Jesus.

The paradise tree became a popular symbol and was often set up in churches and homes. Gradually, people began adding other decorations besides apples, including cookies shaped like stars or angels. Many years later, German and English immigrants brought the tradition of a decorated tree to America.

About the same time, the tradition of giving gifts began as a way to honor the three gifts that the wise men gave to Baby Jesus. “Santa Claus” came on the scene in the 4th century when a Christian leader named St. Nicholas wanted to give money to poor people without them knowing about it. Legend says that one day, he climbed the roof of a house and dropped a purse of money down the chimney. It landed in a stocking, which a girl had laid to dry by the fire.

But what was the first Christmas gift? Not the money pouch from St. Nicholas. Not even the gold, frankincense and myrrh that the magi brought to Jesus. The first Christmas gift was the Savior.

Read Luke 2:8-20.

★ Did the shepherds realize that an awesome gift had been given? How do you know?

Remember that Ephesians 2:8-9 tells us that grace is the “gift of God” that saves us? Our salvation in Jesus is a gift, the best gift ever. All we have to do to make this gift ours is trust in Jesus as our Savior and ask him to forgive our sins.

When Adam and Eve disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden, the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil became a symbol of their sin. God gave us a new tree to be the symbol of forgiveness. Let’s hear about that tree.

Read Luke 23:32-34.

Peter writes of this forgiveness tree.

*“He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness.” (1 Peter 2:24)*

★ What’s another name for this forgiveness tree? The cross.

★ How can you remember to think of the forgiveness tree when you look at a Christmas tree?

## 3 Trim the Tree!

Each week your class will decorate a different tree to be displayed in the Children’s Ministry area. Each tree has a “theme” and can be created quickly and easily while still allowing kids to add creativity to their project. Have Christmas music playing and provide Christmas cookies to munch on while the kids make their ornaments and decorate their tree.

**We’re going to make decorations for a tree that will be set up for everyone to see. The theme of our tree is** (Snowy Woods, Frosty the Tree-Man, Sounds of Christmas or Christmas Kaleidoscope).

### Snowy Woods Tree

- \_\_ white paper
- \_\_ snowflake patterns
- \_\_ scissors
- \_\_ glue
- \_\_ glitter
- \_\_ silver cording

1. Give each student a sheet of white paper and a pair of scissors
2. Make several snowflake patterns available for kids to choose.
3. Help kids fold and cut their paper to create snowflakes.
4. Decorate the snowflakes with glitter sprinkled on thin lines of glue.
5. Glue a loop of silver cording to the back of the snowflake and hang it on the tree.

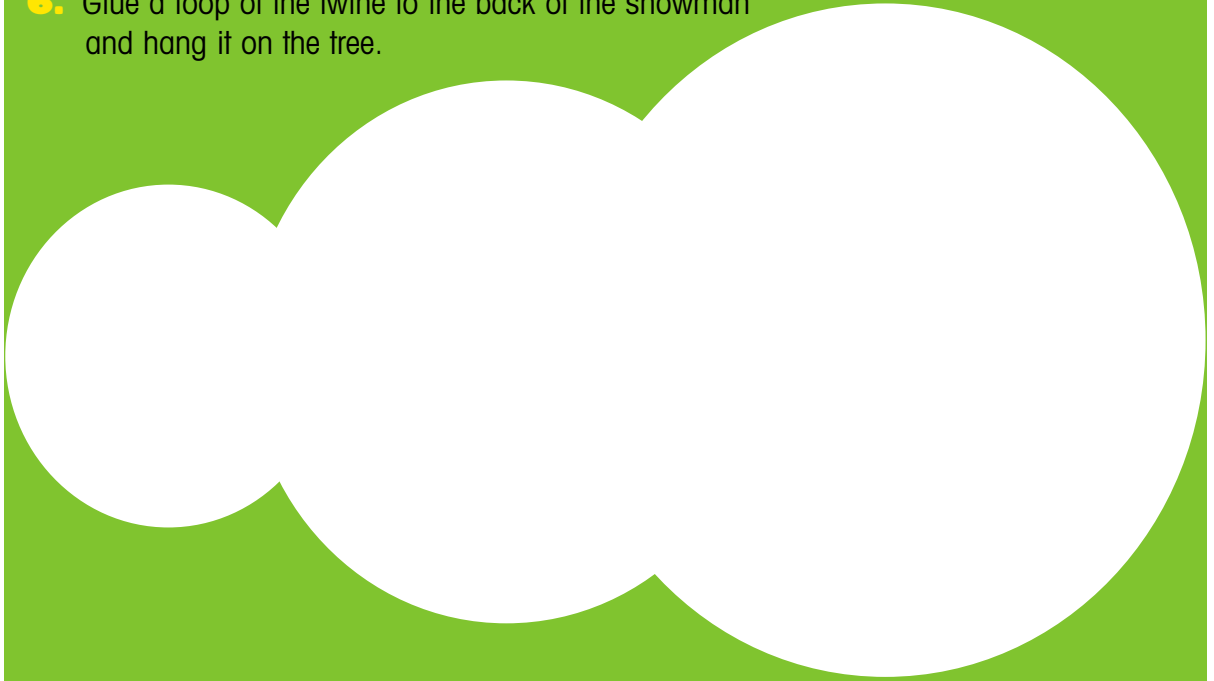


# Frosty the Tree Man

- \_\_ craft foam
- \_\_ markers
- \_\_ scissors
- \_\_ felt scraps
- \_\_ plaid fabric scraps
- \_\_ buttons
- \_\_ pom-poms
- \_\_ google eyes
- \_\_ markers
- \_\_ twigs
- \_\_ glue
- \_\_ twine



1. Trace the snowman pattern on the foam and cut it out.
2. Use the scraps of felt and fabric to make hats, scarves, etc.
3. Use buttons and pom-poms as decorations or to create a nose.
4. Use google eyes or draw eyes with a marker.
5. Add twig arms.
6. Glue a loop of the twine to the back of the snowman and hang it on the tree.



# Sounds of Christmas

- \_\_ blank CDs
- \_\_ foam Christmas shapes or stickers
- \_\_ gemstones
- \_\_ bric-a-brac
- \_\_ bells
- \_\_ tacky glue or glue gun (with adult supervision)
- \_\_ gold cord
- \_\_ scissors



1. Glue gemstones, bric-a-brac, bells, Christmas shapes or stickers on the CDs to make colorful ornaments.
2. Glue a loop of gold cord to the back of the CDs and hang them on the tree.

# Christmas Kaleidoscope

- \_\_\_ clear, plastic ornament balls
- \_\_\_ ornament hangers
- \_\_\_ different colors of acrylic craft paint



1. Remove the top from the ornament ball.
2. Squeeze in a very small amount of acrylic paint and gently swirl it around inside the ball.
3. Repeat this process twice more.
4. Replace the top and hang the ornament on the tree.



## The Forgiveness Tree Meditation

- Place the wooden cross ornaments inside the gift box with the top wrapped separately.
- After your Christmas tree decorating, gather kids in a circle once again.

- ★ **What happens in your house on Christmas morning?** Give kids time to share some of their Christmas morning traditions.
- ★ **How many of you get up on Christmas morning, look at the tree, find the presents with your name on them, then just walk away?**

Can you imagine what it would be like if you left your Christmas presents sitting wrapped until New Year's or Valentine's Day or even the 4th of July? You would never get to enjoy what was inside? That's exactly what some people do with God's gift of a Savior. They know God has sent a wonderful gift, but they never open it. Let's open God's gift.

Try to take the lid off, but act like it's stuck.

- ★ **How do we open God's gift?** Kids may want you to use scissors or rip it open.

No, none of those ideas will work with God's gift. To open God's gift, you need to say "Thank you, God, for the gift of your Son who died for me." You need to trust in Jesus and believe that he is God's Son, your Savior.

Release the box lid and take it off. Pass around the box with the "forgiveness tree" ornaments and have each child take one.



★ What kind of tree did we call this? The forgiveness tree.

I want each of you to think about how important it is to unwrap God's Christmas gift to you. The Christmas tree leads to the cross—the forgiveness tree. It's not all shiny and full of beautiful colors like the trees we decorated today. But it's the best gift you could ever receive.

## Ending Prayer

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Lord Jesus,

Thank you for giving us the gift of grace. Show each of us how to unwrap it in our lives. In your name we pray, amen.

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