

Today's Suggested Schedule— September 20, 2026

Bible Story: The Vine and the Branches • *John 15:5-11*

Bottom Line: I can grow when I stay close to God.

Monthly Memory Verse: *My sheep listen to my voice. I know them, and they follow me.* • John 10:27 NIV

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

ORDER OF SERVICE

OPENING SMALL GROUP (20 minutes)

SOCIAL: Providing Time for Fun Interaction

Early Arriver /

Opening Activity

LARGE GROUP (30-35 minutes)

WORSHIP: Inviting People to Respond to God

STORY: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways

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

SMALL GROUP (25-30 minutes)

GROUPS: Creating a Safe Place to Connect

Reinforcement Activity

Prayer Journal

TAKE HOME

Devotional Page

Social Opening Activity Made to Move

What You Need:

-  "Vine Relay" Activity Page
-  Cardstock
-  Brown construction paper
-  Scissors
-  Painter's tape

What You Do:

Before the Activity:

- Print "Vine Relay" on cardstock and cut, one cutout per kid.
- Cut long strips of brown paper
- Tape them into a vine shape with branches off the main vine.
- You may also use tape to make a vine shape directly on the floor or wall.
- Prepare tape ahead of time by rolling small pieces and sticking them along the vine (sticky side out), spaced out for easy access.
- Place one to two extra tape rolls nearby for leaders only.
- Mark two start lines on the floor with painter's tape.

During the Activity:

- Welcome kids by name with a high-five, fist bump, smile, or wave as they arrive.
- Once most kids arrive, divide them into two teams and have each team line up behind the starting lines.
- Say: "Alright, friends! Today we're going to build something really cool – but you have to work as a team!"
- Point to the vine. Say: "Do you see this vine? Right now, it looks pretty empty. Your job is to fill it up with leaves! Here's how the game works. When it's your turn, you will run to the vine, grab one leaf, and stick it onto a piece of tape that is already on the vine. Then run back and tag the next person in line. Once you have finished your turn, you can take a seat at the back of the line."
- You can demonstrate the steps as you explain: run → grab leaf → stick leaf → return → tag.
- Say: "Let's practice the rules together. How many leaves do you take at a time?" (*Allow kids to respond.*) "That's right. One leaf at a time! And where do the leaves go?" (*Allow response.*) "Yes - on the vine! Make sure your leaf is touching the vine so it stays connected."
- Say: "When I say go, the first person in each line will start. Ready? 3... 2... 1... GO!"
- Start the relay and encourage kids as they play:
 - "Nice job!"
 - "Keep going!"
 - "Look at your vines grow!"
- The game ends when the first team has had all team members successfully add leaves to the vine.

What You Say:

"You all worked hard to build your vines! At first, it just looked like a line but as you added more leaves, it started to look full and alive. Jesus used a picture like this to teach us something important. He said, 'I am the vine, and you are the branches.' That means we are like branches that grow on a vine."

Branches don't grow by themselves! They only grow when they stay connected to the vine. That's how they get what they need to live and grow. In the same way, we grow when we stay close to God. When we spend time with God, like praying, reading the Bible, and listening to Him, it's like staying connected to the vine. That's how we grow on the inside. If a branch isn't connected, it can't grow anything. But when it stays connected, it grows strong and full. **[Bottom Line] I can grow when I stay close to God.** I can't wait to learn more with you!

EveryChild Pro-Tips

- *Allow kids to walk and take their time instead of run.*
- *Pair kids up with a buddy*
- *Offer verbal countdowns and clear turn-taking cues*

LARGE GROUP

What You Need: TV, Pre-Loaded Video Content

What You Do:

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

Lead your group to the Small Group activity.

1. Stay Connected Made to Connect

What You Need:

- Ball of yarn

What You Do:

During the Activity:

- Have kids sit in a circle.
- Say: “We’re going to build something together again, but this time, we’re not building with leaves. We’re going to build a connection.”
- Hold up the ball of yarn. Say: “This yarn is going to help us see what it looks like to stay connected.”
- Explain how it works:
 - Leader holds the end of the yarn.
 - Leader says one way to stay connected to God.
 - Leader tosses the ball to a kid while holding the end.
 - Each kid shares and tosses to someone new, while holding on to the piece of yarn.
- Say: “When you catch the yarn, you’ll say one way you can stay connected to God. Then hold onto your piece and toss the ball to someone else.”
- Demonstrate:
 - Hold the end.
 - Say: “I can stay connected to God by praying.”
 - Toss to the yarn to a kid.
- Continue guiding the activity as kids participate.
- Prompt if needed:
 - “Reading the Bible.”
 - “Talking to God.”
 - “Listening during quiet time.”
 - “Doing what God says.”
- As the web forms, pause and point it out.
- Say: “Look at this! We’re all connected.”
- After all kids have had a turn, gently lower the yarn web to the floor or keep holding if manageable.

What You Say:

“Take a look at the yarn in your hands. It connects all of us, and it helps us see something important. Jesus said, ‘I am the vine, and you are the branches.’ A branch stays alive and grows when it stays connected to the vine. That’s where it gets everything it needs. When Jesus said this, He was teaching that He is our source. He is the One who gives us what we need to grow and begin to show things like love, joy, and patience. But there are a lot of other voices around us every day. Voices that try to tell us what matters most, what we should do, or how we should live. Sometimes those voices can be loud and distracting. Jesus invites us to stay connected to Him instead. When we stay close to Jesus – when we listen to His words, talk to Him, and remember what is true – we start to recognize His voice more clearly. We begin to want the things He wants. And over time, our lives begin to show it. We don’t have to try to grow all on our own. Growth happens when we stay connected to Him. So, when you think about this yarn, let it remind you: staying close to Jesus is what helps you grow strong on the inside. **[Bottom Line] I can grow when I stay close to God.**”

2. Fruit or No Fruit?

Live for God | Application Activity

Made to Play

What You Need:

-  "Fruit or No Fruit?" Activity Page
-  Cardstock
-  Scissors

What You Do:

Before the Activity:

- Print "Fruit or No Fruit?" on cardstock and cut, one set per Small Group.

During the Activity:

- Give each kid a "Fruit" and "No Fruit" card.
- Say: "We're going to play a game called 'Fruit or No Fruit?' Listen carefully to each situation I read out, then you'll decide – does this show fruit growing in someone's life, or not?"
- Hold up the "Fruit" card or side. Say: "Before we start, let's talk about what 'fruit' really means. When the Bible talks about fruit, it doesn't mean apples or bananas! It means the good things people can see in your life. Things like being kind, telling the truth, helping others, and choosing to do what is right. That's what we mean by fruit."
- Hold up the "No Fruit" card or side. Say: "And 'No Fruit' means choices that don't show those things. Like being unkind, selfish, or ignoring what God says."
- Say: "So as we play, listen carefully and decide: does this show fruit growing in someone's life, or not? Ready? Let's try one together."
- Practice round:
 - "Helping a friend who is hurt."
 - Allow kids to respond.
 - Say: "That's right! That's fruit! When we stay connected to Jesus, we grow things like kindness and love."
- Round 1
 - "Being kind to your brother or sister."
 - "Yes – fruit! Choosing kindness is always the right choice."
- Round 2
 - "Ignoring someone who needs help."
 - "Right – no fruit. That choice would not show love."
- Round 3
 - "Taking time to pray."
 - "That's fruit! That is an amazing way to stay connected to God."
- Round 4
 - "Only thinking about yourself."
 - "That's not fruit. That isn't how Jesus teaches us to live!"
- Round 5
 - "Telling the truth, even when it's hard."
 - "Yes we are showing fruit when we are honest."
- Round 6
 - "Choosing not to listen to what God says."
 - "You're right, that would be no fruit. We don't want to miss what God is showing us!"
- Round 7

- “Asking someone who is alone if they want to play with you.”
 - “Fruit! What a great way to show kindness.”
- Round 8
 - “Forgiving someone when they hurt your feelings.”
 - “Yes, this is showing fruit too! Forgiving can be hard, but when we stay connected to Jesus, He helps us.”
- Have kids put their cards down.

What You Say:

“You made some really thoughtful choices in that game. Jesus said that when we stay connected to Him, our lives will begin to show it. Not just in what we say, but in how we live. Those ‘fruit’ moments we talked about, like kindness, honesty, and forgiveness, don’t come from just trying harder. They come from staying close to Jesus. When we listen to Him, spend time with Him, and follow what He says, He begins to change us from the inside out. That means when you choose what is right – even when it’s hard – that’s a sign that God is at work in you. And when it’s difficult, that doesn’t mean you’ve failed! It just means it’s a moment to come back and stay close. Talk to God and ask Him to help you. Because real growth doesn’t happen all at once. Just like real fruit doesn’t grow on trees overnight! You might notice that growth in small ways – like choosing kindness, telling the truth, or having patience when something is hard. It happens little by little as you stay connected. ***[Bottom Line] I can grow when I stay close to God.***”

3. Pray and Dismiss

Pray to God | Prayer Activity

Made to Reflect

What You Need:

☐ No supplies needed

What You Do:

During the Activity:

- Invite kids to sit in a circle or spread out with a little personal space.
- Say: “We’re going to take a few quiet moments to talk to God. You can close your eyes if you want or just look down to help you focus. I’m going to say a few short prayers. After each one, you can quietly repeat it in your heart or say your own words to God.”
- Pause between each line
 - “God, thank You that You are always with me.”
 - “Help me stay close to You.”
 - “Help me listen to Your voice.”
 - “Help me follow You – even when it’s hard.”
- Say: “Now I want you to take a moment to talk to God in your own words. You can ask Him to help you stay close to Him this week.”
- Allow twenty to thirty seconds of quiet and then gently close with “Amen.”

What You Say:

“Jesus said He is the vine, and we are the branches. That means we’re not meant to do life on our own. Prayer is one way we stay close to Him. You can talk to God anytime, about anything. And you can also take time to just be quiet and listen. God is always with you. He is the one who gives you life and helps you grow. **[Bottom Line] I can grow when I stay close to God.**”

As adults arrive to pick up, remind the kids that they can stay connected to Jesus this week!