



This child

A mini musical for Christmas



A six-session children's program for use in weekly, holiday or camping ministries.

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Hi!

This program is one of the *kids@club* series, by Christian Education Publications (CEP), for Australasian kids in a kids' club setting. We're sure that you will find it really helpful as you plan a program to suit the specific needs of your group.

Our aims

kids@club products are strongly committed to **bringing the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ** to primary school children and to **making the Word of God relevant** to their daily lives.

All of the programs have been written by experienced club leaders who have worked with a wide range of kids in a variety of settings. Many of the program ideas are 'tried and true' – some of them many times over – so the wrinkles have been ironed out.

Help with Bible talks

We have given you lots of help with the **Bible teaching segment**. This will free you up to spend more time praying for your club members and thinking creatively about how to present your program. Nothing stifles creativity like the grind of having to prepare a fresh talk every session!

What's in the pack?

Within each pack you will usually find a **Bible teaching outline** for each session, visual aids and suggestions for **music, craft and games**. Sometimes a leader-training article will be included, or ideas for extending the program an extra week or two.

You may photocopy

You may photocopy any of the Visual aids or photocopiable activity pages, for use within your own club only.

We are sure you will want to promote this material with other clubs. The greater the distribution, the greater the benefits to all as it enables us to continue to produce worthwhile programs.

Your ideas

Finally, we would like some **feedback** on this program. Let us know how it went, what ideas it stimulated in you and so on. This will enable us to make the next edition even better!

We'd also like to hear from you **if you have planned and run a successful program in your kids' club** and would be happy for it to be made available to the wider Australian and New Zealand community of kids' clubs.

May God bless you and the children in your club as you discover together the marvellous truths of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Rhonda Watson

Leaders' notes

The Bible teaching

This child is a six-session program designed to teach children the story of God's plan to send Jesus, the Saviour. As well as six Bible times, the program includes instructions on how to present a half-hour nativity 'mini-musical', plus ideas for costumes, props and musical instruments – all made by the children.

The program, written by Lydia Smith, was first presented at the Baptist church in Mudgee. A long-time children's worker, Lydia says: 'The musical was one of the most enjoyable experiences I've ever had with children. They just loved it, too'.

Lydia writes ...

When I was small, my mother used to make a delicious meat loaf. Down the centre of the loaf, buried in the mince, she would place whole hard-boiled eggs, so that wherever you sliced the loaf, you'd get a circle of egg. In a way, the Bible is a bit like my Mum's meat loaf! No matter where you look, you find Jesus! He is present in different ways from Genesis to Revelation. Sometimes we can make the mistake of thinking that the Old and New Testaments are very different from each other, but in fact the purpose of the Old Testament is to point to the new – to point to the person and work of Jesus.

This program aims to help children learn that, although the Bible is made up of many 'books', it is really one story, with one overall theme: God's plan for our salvation, through Jesus. The Bible times enable the gospel message to be presented and reinforced in many different ways. In addition, the children are involved in preparing and presenting the musical, which brings to life many of the themes addressed in the talks.

Bible times visual aid

As a visual aid for the Bible teaching, we suggest a **Bible bookcase**. There is a black and white version on page 7. Coloured posters can be purchased from CEP for \$2.50 each (including postage). It shows a bookcase with the books of the Bible pictured in order.

The Bible bookmark (page 8) is also needed. This is moved along the 'shelf' to the appropriate spot each week. It can be simply a circle of red cardboard with Blu-Tack on the back. Three bookmarks are needed in Bible time 3.

We suggest you also purchase the **Bible events** or **Bible timeline** poster packs from CEP. The **Bible events** posters illustrate many of the main events from the Bible. The **Bible timeline** posters show the progression of the Bible with the relevant dates and biblical books. They are very useful teaching aids and both packs include extra notes with background and teaching ideas. There are also black and white photocopyables of the posters in each pack so the children can each have their own copy to colour in as they learn about biblical characters and events or to add notes to.

The musical

This child, the mini-musical which forms a part of this program, is great fun, but it involves quite a bit of work from a core group of adults and plenty of input from parent volunteers. This is a good opportunity to strengthen ties with the parents of your group, who may well be delighted to contribute time to the project. Harness their talents! See if anyone would be willing to be 'Costume coordinator' or 'Chief props designer'. Often parents just need to be asked. Children will love the pace and power of Graham Kendrick's songs, and the humour of the script. The play is not designed to be cute or overly pious, but true to the way children speak today. It aims to communicate the excitement of the coming of the Saviour.

You will see that there are plenty of speaking parts for those who love the limelight, but do encourage every child to consider a speaking part, particularly those who may not generally be chosen for roles in school activities.

Remember, the aim of the exercise is to have fun, and to work together for the glory of God, not to present a flawless, professional production!

Because the children produce their own costumes and props, including backdrops and sets, those children whose gifts and interest lie in artistic and practical areas (rather than performing) are well catered for, but all children should take part in the finished production. You will find that even children who seem initially reluctant and shy will be carried away by the excitement of the project, especially if you are excited and encouraging!

The timing

Six Bible time sessions are provided, and the final session is devoted to rehearsal. The program can be extended by including a 'costume workshop' day.

Co-ordinating the whole thing!

You will need a folder or display book in which you keep careful track of what you will be doing when. An example might be:

Date:

Bible time	Songs	Craft	Other
3	'Tonight' – full run through 'This child' – revise chorus	Wise Men: continue musical instruments Angels: start backdrops	Rehearse Nathan, Miriam separately Costumes: decorate second side

Make sure you have sufficient time to cover everything you need to do! You may need to hold an extra afternoon's rehearsal (perhaps followed by a sausage sizzle).

The legalities of performing

We all enjoy good Christian music. The composers and lyricists have a right to be paid. Your legal responsibilities for using copyright music are set out in the music section (page 49). Perhaps you could appoint one of your team to deal with these matters as soon as you have agreed on how you intend to use the program.

A word about games

Because much time is spent in rehearsing for the musical and in designing the props, little time will be available for games, and this pack does not include the usual games suggestions. We recommend you use a couple of old favourites at the beginning of club time to settle and relax the children, and then get on with all you want to accomplish.



CEP's *Fantastic games* book is an excellent resource of games for all occasions if you are needing ideas for a few new games.

Memory verses

As most children will have the demands of lines to learn, a memory verse has not been included in this pack. The truths taught in the Bible times are reinforced in the scripts and song lyrics. If your group is not performing the musical and you wish to incorporate a memory verse, you might like to use one or more of the following:

Isaiah 53:6–7 (CEV)

All of us were like sheep that had wandered off. We had each gone our own way, but the LORD gave him the punishment we deserved.

John 1:29 (CEV)

Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

1 Timothy 1:15 (CEV)

'Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.' This saying is true, and it can be trusted.

1 John 4:14a (CEV)

God sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world.

Revelation 22:7a (CEV)

Jesus says, 'Remember, I am coming soon!'

Music suggestions

Although the children will have songs to learn for the musical you may also want to include some other songs from these readily available CDs.

- **Promises, Promises**, CEP
- **Best news!**, Tony Jones and Mountain feet
- **Jesus rocks the world**, Colin Buchanan
- **The King, the snake and the promise**, Emu Music
- **Baa baa doo baa baa**, Colin Buchanan

These CDs are available from CEP.



1

Saved – a plan from the beginning

Genesis 3

Aims

For the children to understand that God's beautiful creation was spoilt by sin, but God planned to send Jesus to put things right.

You will need

- q The **Bible bookcase poster**
- q CEP's **Bible timeline** or **Bible events posters** (optional)
- q A drawing (see **Way to go**)
- q A CEV Bible marked at **Genesis 1:31**, **Romans 3:24**
- q Overhead projector, blank OHT and permanent and non-permanent pens
- q A Bible bookmark (see **Leader's notes**, page 5)
- q A copy of the puzzle photocopiable (page 11), enlarged if desired (see **Way to go**)
- q Blu-tack

Way to go

Narrative with leader's skit and jigsaw puzzle.

After you have copied and enlarged the jigsaw puzzle (page 11) cut it into 12 sections along the medium thickness lines and hide them around the room.

The short sketch at the beginning of **Teaching time** can be done with a piece of artwork, or with a toy, or a piece of pottery.

Display the **Bible bookcase poster** and/or **Bible Timeline** or **Bible events posters**.

Have the overhead projector, transparency and pens ready.

Introduction

Skit

Leader 1 enters with a piece of artwork he or she has made, and shows it to the group. Leader 1 is very proud of it. Leader 2 comes in and is jealous of Leader 1. Leader 2 takes a piece of black chalk and scribbles all over the picture and walks out in a huff. Leader 1 is very upset – the artwork is spoiled!

Teaching time

In the Bible, we find out that God created the whole world. He created the land and the sea, all the animals and plants, the night and the day, the stars and the moon ... he made everything!

After he had made the world and everything in it, God made people. He made them to enjoy a special friendship with him and gave them everything they needed.

The Bible tells us that once God had finished creating the world he looked at all he had made and was pleased.

 Invite a child to read **Genesis 1:31** from a CEV Bible.

God's creation was perfect and he was pleased to have people as his friends. The first peoples' names were Adam and Eve. God gave them everything they needed. He gave them a beautiful garden to live in and they lived in peace with one another.

What is it like when we live in peace with one another? (Accept responses and write these on the overhead transparency in permanent ink. You may need to prompt the children by helping them think about their relationships at home or at school.)



There was one thing God told Adam and Eve not to do. He told them not to eat from a particular tree, which was dangerous for them. But one day God's enemy, Satan, visited Adam and Eve in their garden in the form of a snake.

He said, 'Don't trust God! Eat that fruit. You'll be OK. Nothing will happen to you. You'll know all about good and evil – you'll be just like God! Live your own way. Don't live God's way.'

Adam and Eve believed the snake and ate the fruit from the tree, even though God had told them not to.

When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, they spoiled the special friendship they had with him. They became scared of him and hid from him. They had messed up in a big way.

Just like the painting that was destroyed by ... (leader's name who spoiled the painting), Adam and Eve's friendship with God was spoiled too. They became suspicious of one another and didn't live in peace with each other and the environment around them any more.

The Bible tells us that Adam and Eve weren't the only ones to disobey God. It says that we all sin. (Write the word 'sin' on the overhead transparency with non-permanent ink.)

What's the middle letter in 'sin'? ('I')

That's what sin is all about. It's when we say, 'I want to do things my way!', 'I don't care what anyone else says!', 'I don't want to take notice of what God says!', 'I, I, I'.

Sin is putting ourselves before God and others.

What are some of the wrong things we do that the Bible calls sin? (Accept responses. Write these on the overhead transparency with non-permanent ink.)

God doesn't want his world to be this way! It makes him very sad and angry that people ignore what he says, and disobey him. He loves his world and the people in it. God will not let his world be spoiled forever.

Indicate the **Bible bookcase poster**. Place your bookmark on the book of **Genesis**.

If you have the **Bible timeline** or **Bible events** posters point to creation and Genesis.


Right from the beginning, God had a plan to rescue people from the big mess of sin. God had a plan for people to stop being his enemies and become his friends again.

In the Bible, God tells us about his plan. God planned to send someone to die for us and set us free from sin.

Who is this person who would defeat Satan and set us free from sin?

Ask the children to hunt for the hidden puzzle pieces. Choose one or two children to fit the puzzle together, either on the floor or with Blu-tack on the wall. Give a hand if necessary.

The special person God talked about was Jesus.

 Read **Romans 3:24** from a CEV Bible.

Jesus was the person who defeated Satan and set us free from sin. Jesus did something amazing for us by dying for us. Everyone who becomes a friend of Jesus has their sins wiped away. (As you do this, wipe across the OHT. The words you wrote in non-permanent ink, the wrong things we do, should wipe away.) If we believe in what Jesus has done for us God no longer sees the wrong things we have done and we can have a friendship with him again.

Over the next few sessions we will find out more about what the Bible says about Jesus and why we celebrate his birthday at Christmas time.

Prayer

Father God, thank you for the wonderful world that you created. Thank you, too, for loving us so much that you sent Jesus to rescue us from our problem of sin. Help us to know that we can be friends with you when we trust and believe in Jesus. Amen.

Song suggestion

God's mega-plan, track 2 of CEP's *Promises, promises* CD.



