



Juneau's Puppy Playhouse Ages 3 through Pre-K!

# Bible Adventures & Missions

Preschool Station Leader Manual

## Group resources really work!

This Group resource incorporates our R.E.A.L. approach to ministry. It reinforces a growing friendship with Jesus, encourages long-term learning, and results in life transformation, because it's:



### Relational

Person-to-person interaction enhances spiritual growth and builds Christian friendships.

### Experiential

What we experience through action and discussion sticks with us up to 9 times longer than what we simply hear or read.

### Applicable

The aim of ministry is to equip people to be both hearers and doers of God's Word.

### Lifelong

Experiences transform the heart, moving faith beyond the walls of church and into everyday life for years to come.

## Bible Adventures & Missions Leader Manual

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Visit our websites:

[group.com](http://group.com)

[group.com/TrueNorth](http://group.com/TrueNorth)

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27 26 25



## Thanks for joining the team!

True north is a fixed point on Earth's globe. Unlike magnetic north, *true north* is unmoving, unchanging, reliable, resolute.

If you're reading this manual, chances are that *Jesus* is your true north. You've trusted him to be a faithful friend when life's journey got lonely.

You've relied on his unchanging love through life's ups and downs. You've turned to Jesus' comforting words of hope when the world felt cold and dark.

And you want to share *all* of that with kids in your community!

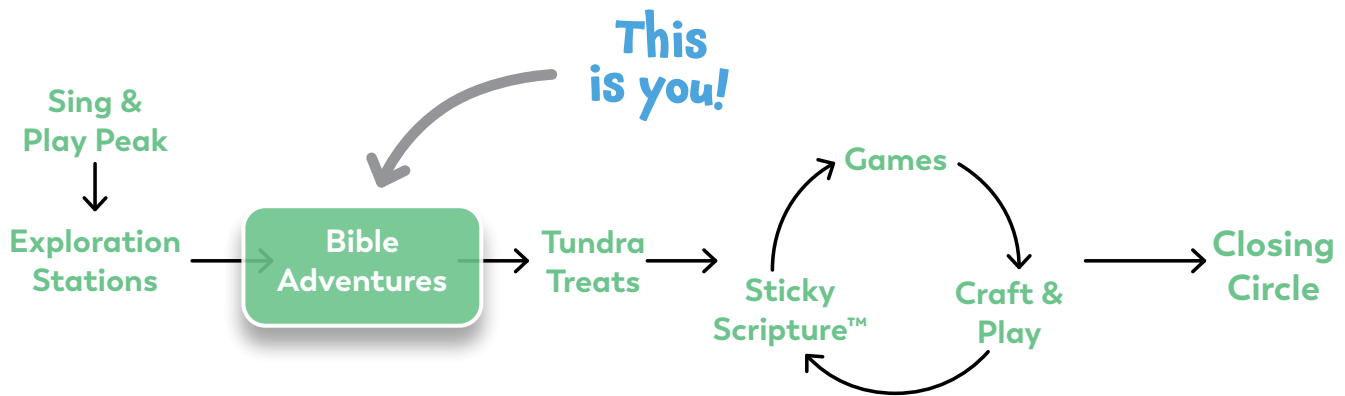
Like you, we love Jesus, and we love kids. We know that kids today may find their world untamed and wild. We understand that kids' source of truth may shift, depending on the latest news headline, trend, or social media influencer. We long for kids to boldly step out in faith, knowing that Jesus always points them in the right direction. He is *their* true north. Now...and for eternity!

That's why we're so glad you've joined this adventure! Think of our team as trail guides, going ahead to make sure the terrain is smooth and the trail is well-marked. We've tested these activities with kids, so you can make the most of every minute you have. And we're praying that God's vast love amazes and astounds you as you lead kids into the wonder of a friendship with Jesus.

It's hard to find your way in a world gone wild.

But we have Jesus—our true north!

Together, let's give kids a rock-solid foundation and point them to Jesus, their unmovable, unshakable friend forever.

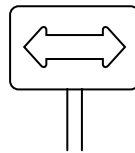


## Before True North



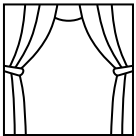
### Pray for everyone who will attend True North.

Ask God to prepare your heart and the hearts of the kids and leaders who will be part of VBS.



### Choose a room for Bible adventures.

You'll have all the preschoolers together...and they'll need room to move! Kids aren't just sitting still during these Bible adventures!



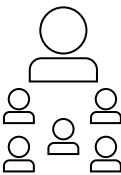
### Set the stage to inspire imaginations.

Visit [pinterest.com/groupvbs](https://pinterest.com/groupvbs) or view our online catalog at [group.com/TrueNorth](https://group.com/TrueNorth) for decorating ideas.



### Work with the VBS Director to collect necessary supplies.

Almost all the supplies are easy to find around the church, from church members, or from Group.



### Determine the number of Crews you'll have.

Crews consist of five preschool-age children (kids who've not yet finished kindergarten) and one adult or teenage leader. Crews travel together and circle up for small-group discussions so each Crew member has the opportunity to share. Check with the Preschool Director to get an idea of how many Crews you'll have.

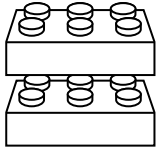


### Familiarize yourself with Operation Kid-to-Kid™.

Preschoolers get to share in this relevant mission project. Check out the Operation Kid-to-Kid section on page 5 so you can tell little ones how they'll help kids in their country have warm clothes.

# During True North

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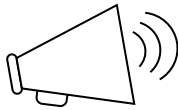
## Before Bible Adventures, help with Exploration Stations.

Talk with children as they try out Exploration Stations activities. The instructions for each activity help preschoolers make the connection to what they'll be learning each day.



## Be prepared to tell the Bible adventure with expression and enthusiasm.

Be familiar with your “script” so you don’t have to read straight from the leader guide. Get ready to engage children with eye contact and drama.



## Use an attention-getting signal.

Attention-getting signals let kids know when it’s time to stop what they’re doing and look at you. Use the Wilderness Whistle (available from [group.com](http://group.com) or your Group VBS supplier) or another signal of your choice.



## Get Crew Leaders involved!

When you need little ones to listen, follow instructions, or pay attention, call on Crew Leaders to help. Make sure Crew Leaders are ready to help bring kids’ attention back to you.



## Repeat the daily Bible Point often.

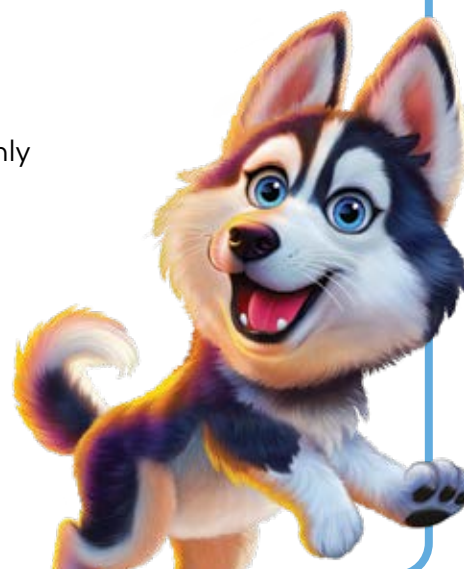
Every activity focuses on one memorable Bible truth called the Bible Point. Repeating the Bible Point helps kids remember it and apply it to their lives after VBS. Kids will help finish each Bible Point by pretending to pull a rope with both hands and saying, “trust Jesus!”

## Sample Schedule

TIME	GROUP A Crews: <u>1-3</u>	GROUP B Crews: <u>4-6</u>	GROUP C Crews: <u>7-9</u>
9:00-9:25	<b>Sing &amp; Play Peak</b> (with elementary kids) <i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>		
9:30-9:45	<b>Exploration Stations</b> <i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>		
9:50-10:15	<b>Bible Adventures &amp; Missions</b> <i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>		
10:20-10:40	<b>Tundra Treats</b> (with elementary kids) <i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>		
10:45-11:00	<b>Sticky Scripture</b>	<b>Games</b>	<b>Craft &amp; Play</b>
	<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>		
11:05-11:20	<b>Craft &amp; Play</b>	<b>Sticky Scripture</b>	<b>Games</b>
	<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>		
11:25-11:40	<b>Games</b>	<b>Craft &amp; Play</b>	<b>Sticky Scripture</b>
	<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>		
11:45-12:00	<b>Closing Circle</b>		

### Day 1 Schedule

On Day 1, preschoolers do not start their day at Sing & Play Peak. Instead, they go straight to Juneau's Puppy Playhouse where they'll be warmly welcomed and can make an easy transition to their first day of VBS at Exploration Stations. After 25 minutes of free-play activities, they're off to a Bible adventure with you. You'll have an extra 20 minutes to get to know one another, plus time to introduce preschoolers to the awesome Sing & Play Peak music.





# Comfort in the Cold

## Kids Helping Kids

In the United States, more than 1 in 6 children live in poverty. Millions of families struggle to provide the most basic needs—warm clothes, socks, and blankets—for their kids. As temperatures dip in the fall and winter, too many children walk to school in threadbare clothing. They shiver through recess or even in class. Bare heads miss the comfort of a warm stocking cap. Numb fingers and toes ache for cozy mittens or socks. At home, families may not have the luxury of turning up the heat on a cold day, and some kids don't have a heavy blanket to snuggle under at bedtime.

But we can change that!

World Vision is passionate about meeting the needs of children *everywhere*. Their commitment to support and assist families doesn't just reach across oceans; it's also active right here in North America. That's why the team at Group Publishing is excited to partner with our friends at World Vision, who are making a big impact to improve daily life in practical ways.

**A \$5 donation can provide approximately \$70 worth of brand-new warm clothes and blankets for a child in North America!** Because of World Vision's network of partners, a small donation can stretch nearly 14 times in value. Wow! We can make a big difference, bringing the warmth of God's love to kids in a tangible (and tasty) way!

Because Operation Kid-to-Kid is part of every Group VBS, we have the opportunity to bless countless families, helping *them* have access to life's most basic resources!

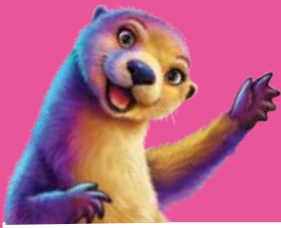


**World Vision** 

Ok2k.org; worldvision.org

# DAY 1

## When we wonder, we can trust Jesus.



**Bible Story:** John prepares the way and baptizes Jesus. (Matthew 3; 11:1-6)

**Bible Verse:** "Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise." (Matthew 7:24)

Just for Day 1, preschoolers skip Sing & Play Peak and go straight to Juneau's Puppy Playhouse to meet their Crews and Crew Leaders.



### Exploration Stations

- Bible Activity Page
- Wonder Wall
- Wild Life: Explore the Campsite
- River Crossing



### Sticky Scripture™

Play "Wilderness Wise" as they explore Matthew 7:24 and discover what it means to have wisdom.



### Tundra Treats



A (Northern) Light Snack



Blizzard in a Cup

### Craft & Play

- Northern Lights Painting
- Snowflake Sun Catcher
- Floating Otter

### Bible Adventures & Missions

Share the exciting news that Jesus is coming, just as John did!



### Closing Circle

Review the day, learn about God Sightings, receive a Watch for God Wristband and Juneau sticker, and wrap up with prayer and music.



### Games



Wonder Where

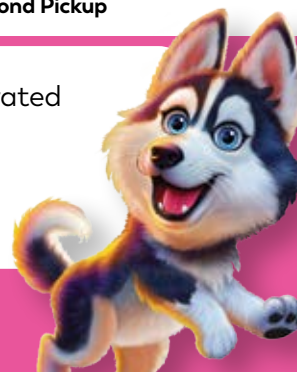


Pond Pickup



Wonder Who-la Hoop

At **True North**, the daily Bible Point is carefully integrated into each station's activities for unforgettable Bible learning. See how your station reinforces today's Bible Point.



## We can Trust Jesus!



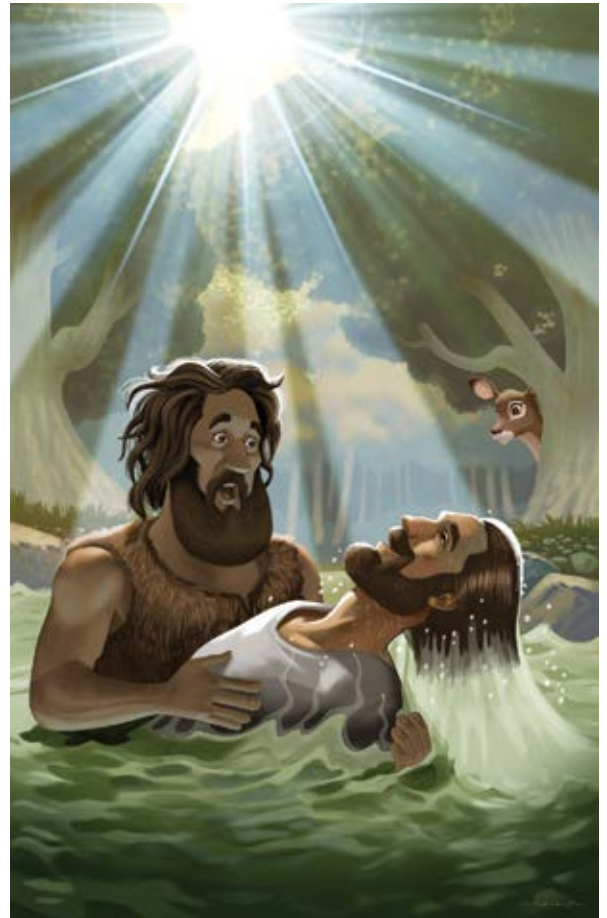
## When we wonder, we can trust Jesus.

**Bible Verse:** “Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise.” (Matthew 7:24)

**Bible Story:** John prepares the way and baptizes Jesus. (Matthew 3; 11:1-6)

Jesus’ cousin John came with unconventional clothes, a pauper’s diet, and a bold message: “Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near.” Meaning? Jesus—the Messiah and fulfillment of God’s kingdom on earth—is *here*! John proclaimed Jesus’ power and authority. He resisted the very idea of baptizing Jesus, the one who would baptize with fire and the Holy Spirit! While John adamantly proclaimed Christ, even *he* had questions about Jesus. From prison, John sent a message to Jesus, asking, “Are you the Messiah we’ve been expecting, or should we keep looking for someone else?” John’s circumstances may have caused him to wonder if (and when) Jesus might take political action. Scholars ponder if John may have assumed the Messiah would be the one to rescue God’s people from Roman rule—as many Jews of the time anticipated. However, Jesus had a greater mission than anyone could comprehend. He came to save *the world* from sin. Such love and compassion go beyond anything we can understand or imagine!

Kids’ curiosity can be intimidating—and a bit wearying. They have so many questions, many of which we simply can’t answer. And when it comes to questions about Jesus, God, or the Bible, adults can *really* feel overwhelmed and underprepared. But we don’t have to have all the answers! Sometimes our wonderings can lead to true *wonder*, as we discover the mystery and marvel of God. Today, celebrate curiosity and questions. Point kids to Jesus, a trustworthy and true friend who will guide us as we seek to know and understand him better.



### Pointing to Jesus

People (even John the Baptist) wondered about Jesus. This passage can encourage kids that it’s okay to ask questions about Jesus—he will always help us find the truth.

# Playhouse Prep

## Supplies:



## Juneau's Puppy Playhouse

Hang the Day 1 Bible Point Poster as well as the Juneau poster.

Hang the Day 1 Bible Story Poster.

Bookmark Matthew 3:2, 15-17 in your Bible. Set the Bible where you can reach it easily.

Have one blue bandanna and one facial tissue per Crew within reach.

Spread out a blanket for each Crew to sit on.

Be sure to have a TV and media player where everyone can easily see it.



## Let's Hit the Trail!

Gather kids in Crews on their Crew blankets, facing you.

**SAY** Hello, friends! Welcome to True North. My name is [name]. Let's go on a big, exciting Bible adventure this week! We'll have mountains of fun as we meet new friends and learn more about the best friend ever—God's Son, Jesus!

Our special place here at True North is called Juneau's Puppy Playhouse. (Juneau is pronounced "JUNE-oh.") Point to the poster of Juneau. This furry friend is named Juneau! He's a husky—that's a kind of dog that often has a special job. Way up north in a place called Alaska, dogs like Juneau sometimes work together to pull sleds through the snow. They're a great team!

And when it's not snowy, all those playful pups get to explore cool forests and massive mountains! Point to some of the decorations around your room.

**ASK** Hmm, what other animals might live in a mountainy forest like this? As kids share, lead them in making noises or actions like some of the animals they imagine.

**SAY** All those cool creatures point to our wonderful, loving friend God and his Son, Jesus! The same God who made the mountains and moose and the whole wide world wants to be your friend. Yes, it's true!

## Learn "Trust" in Sign Language

**SAY** God's Son, Jesus, is a friend we can trust. When we trust someone, we believe they'll do what they say. We believe they'll keep us safe. I wonder something!

**ASK** Who are other friends or family members you trust? Give your own example first. Call out names of people you trust!

**SAY** We trust people like [some of the people kids shared] because they love and care for us. We hold tight to them. There's a way we can use our hands to show that word—trust. Do this with me.

Pretend to pull a rope with both hands.

Lead kids in making the sign for "trust" as they say, "Trust Jesus!" Practice a few times.

### FIELD TEST FINDING

The Northern Wilderness Fabric Wall Hanging inspired kids—especially on the first day, since they hadn't yet been to the Sing & Play Peak area.

### COMPASS CLUE

When you need to get kids' attention, use the Wilderness Whistle. Tell kids that when they hear this fun sound, it's time to stop talking and pay attention. Exciting things are ahead, and they don't want to miss out!

### FIELD TEST FINDING

Most kids called out names of parents or close family members. One little boy piped up in his sweet voice, "I twust evwybody!"



### FIELD TEST FINDING

We've discovered over the years that an easy welcome song is a great routine to establish for little ones. Simple routines like this make children more comfortable and help them know what to expect each day. Begin the song slowly on this first day, helping kids learn the words and actions.

### COMPASS CLUE

Repeat, repeat! Feel free to do activities more than once. You'll give kids time to catch on and jump in.

### FIELD TEST FINDING

We've found that sitting in knee-to-knee circles helps kids practice good listening skills! Everyone can see and hear each other as they share.

## Sing the Welcome Song

**SAY**

Here at True North, you can trust your Crew friends, too. Those are the friends sitting on a blanket with you. Let's sing a song to welcome everyone and say hello! We'll need to use our sign for "trust" again.

Have everyone stand as they're able and sing the following song to the tune of "This Old Man."

Hey, good friend, (Point to a friend)

Come with me! (Motion "come on")

There's so much for us to see! (Put hand above eyes as if searching)

Trust in Jesus; (Make sign for "trust")

He's a friend who's true! (Hug self)

I'm glad to explore with you! (Point to a friend)

Repeat a few times so kids can catch on. You'll sing this each day at Bible Adventures & Missions.

## Meet Your Crew Leader

**SAY**

Let's say hello to *another* special friend who'll help you have mountains of fun—your Crew Leader! If you need help with anything at True North, your Crew Leader is here to take care of you. You can trust your Crew Leader, too! Your Crew will be like Juneau's team of sled dogs—running, playing, and working together. Let's meet our Crew Leaders!

Invite Crews to make knee-to-knee circles so Crew members can see each other. Then have Crew Leaders greet each child in their Crews by name, introduce themselves, then give the child a high-five.

Our Crew Leaders are the best! Right now, let's make sure we remember our Crew Leaders' names. On the count of three, call out your Crew Leader's name. Ready? 1, 2, 3! Pause. Nice!



## Hear the Bible Point

**SAY** Here at True North, we're learning that Jesus is a friend we can trust (make the sign for "trust")—he always points us in the right direction. Today we'll talk about this:

When we wonder, we can trust Jesus.

That's today's Bible Point! Each time someone says, "When we wonder, we can..." you'll help them finish the sentence by making the sign for "trust" like this (make the "trust" sign) and saying, "trust Jesus!" Let's practice! Practice saying the Point and response with kids a few times.



Trust Jesus!

## Meet Ponder and Sing a Song

**SAY** Each day at True North, we'll also meet a new Bible Memory Buddy who'll help us find out more about trusting Jesus. Let's meet today's Buddy now!

Play the "Day 1 Buddy Intro" from the Sing & Play Peak Music DVD.

Show the Day 1 Bible Point Poster.

Ponder is a curious little otter! And Ponder helps us remember that when we wonder, we can... (trust Jesus!)

Hmmm, I wonder what you wonder! We all wonder things about the world, about our families, and about Jesus.

**ASK** What are some things you wonder about Jesus? This isn't a time to answer kids' questions. Simply let them call out their wonderings! If children are shy or quiet, you may ask Crew Leaders to call out questions they have.

**SAY** We all have questions! And when we wonder, we can... (trust Jesus!) He'll help us find the answers. Let's sing a song to celebrate our friend Jesus. Please stand and sing with me!

Play "Let's Trust in Jesus" from the Sing & Play Peak Music DVD.

Sing along and do the motions together.



### FIELD TEST FINDING

We wondered if this first question would be too hard for young kids to answer. But kids jumped in! The first child piped up, "I wonder why Jesus loves us so much." We wonder that, too!

## Begin the Bible Adventure

**SAY** When we wonder, we can... (trust Jesus!) Hold up a Bible. The Bible tells the true story of Jesus! You told me some of the things you wonder about Jesus. Well, back in Bible times, people had questions, too. God had promised to send someone to help and rescue his special people. Hold your arms like this with me. Lead kids in holding palms up and shrugging. Sometimes we do this when we're asking a question. Shrug as you say the following:



**ASK** I wonder what your favorite food is. Talk in your Crew about that—then I won't have to wonder anymore! Allow a minute for Crews to talk about their favorite foods. Then sound the Wilderness Whistle.

**SAY** God's people wondered about God's promised helper—where was the special helper? Lead kids in shrugging. When would he come? Lead kids in shrugging. What would he look like? Lead kids in shrugging. How would they know? Lead kids in shrugging. So many wonderings!

Open your Bible to Matthew 3. The Bible tells us about a man named John who had a special message for those people. I want to share John's special message with you! I'll pass the message to my friend [name of a Crew Leader]. And then [Crew Leader] will pass the message to another Crew Leader. Crew Leaders, you'll then pass the message to your Crews until everyone has heard.

Whisper "Someone great is coming" into the ear of a Crew Leader. Direct the Crew Leader to whisper the message to another Crew Leader, who will pass it to any other Crew Leaders. Then Crew Leaders will each whisper it to one child in the Crew, who will whisper it to another Crew friend. Help children pass the message all the way around the group.

**ASK** What message did you hear?

**SAY** John knew Jesus would do great things. He knew Jesus was sent by God! So John shared that special message about Jesus. But he didn't whisper his message like we did. He said it nice and clear—to lots and lots of people!

Let's pass our special message around again. But this time we'll say it nice and loud. Start by saying "Someone great is coming" in an excited voice. Then help Crews pass the message around in the same way.

## Baptize People

**SAY** John also wanted people to stop doing wrong things. Listen to what he said.

Read aloud Matthew 3:2.

John said, "Repent of your sins and turn to God." That meant "Stop doing things you know are wrong. And turn to things God says are good." A little like this.

Walk two fingers along your arm, like a person.

### FIELD TEST FINDING

Kids got so excited about passing the message. Some of them had overheard what the Station Leader told Crew Leaders, and they giggled, as if they were in on a big and exciting secret. "I know what she said!" It made the fun of sharing John's message grow even more!

**SAY** John said, (abruptly stop your fingers) “**Stop doing things you know are wrong.**” Turn your fingers to face the opposite direction. “**And turn to things God says are right or good.**” Walk your fingers in that direction. **Try that with me! This rhyme might help us remember what John meant.**

Walk fingers on the floor. **Stop right away!**

Stop fingers, and turn them around. **Turn and obey!**

Have children walk their fingers on the floor in front of them in the same way as you repeat the phrase a couple of times.

Say something wrong a preschooler might do, such as tell a lie. Then have kids repeat the rhyme as they turn their “finger people” in the opposite direction as you tell how the child could do what God says is right or good.

**When the people heard John’s message and they did what he said, he baptized them in a river. That means he dunked them in water.**

**When we put things in water, they come out cleaner. Baptizing was a way to show that their hearts were clean and new. Let’s try that with our finger friends!**

Hand each Crew a blue bandanna, and have them spread it out in the middle of their circle. Crew members can take turns putting the bandanna “water” over their fingers, then raising up their fingers and wiggling them happily. Kids can say, “Stop right away. Turn and obey!” as they do it.

## Baptize Jesus

**SAY** One day, Jesus came to the river. Walk your fingers near the water like they’re Jesus. Pause. **Jesus is God’s Son. He’d never done anything wrong.** Lead kids in shrugging and saying: I wonder how he did that!

**Because Jesus is God’s Son, he didn’t need to turn away from wrong things—he’d always done right. But Jesus wanted John to baptize him.** Lead kids in shrugging and saying: I wonder why!

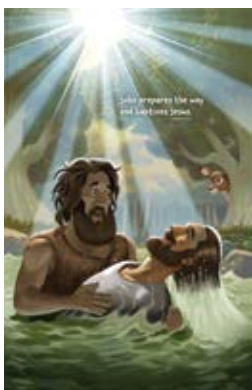
**When we wonder, we can look in the Bible. This is what Jesus said.**

Read Matthew 3:15.

**Jesus wanted to obey God. So John baptized Jesus. Let’s do that.**

Let kids take turns covering their fingers with the blue bandanna, then pulling them out from under the bandanna.





### COMPASS CLUE

If time allows, or if you feel younger kids need to get up and move, play “Power Shuffle” from the Sing & Play Peak Music DVD. Let kids move and dance to the music to celebrate Jesus’ power.

## Hear God’s Message

**SAY**

When people got baptized, they might’ve smiled afterward. Lead kids in smiling. Or maybe they clapped for joy. Lead kids in clapping. Point to the Day 1 Bible Story Poster.

But something *surprising* happened when John baptized Jesus! Look at John’s surprised face! Listen to what happened.

Read aloud Matthew 3:16-17 with lots of expression.

Jesus is God’s Son! God was so happy with Jesus that he spoke and sent his special Spirit to be with Jesus. A dove is a bird—sometimes a white bird! Hold up the tissue. Let’s use our imaginations and think about what that was like!

Hand each Crew Leader a white tissue, and show them how to pinch it in the center so it hangs down. Let children use their fingers to act out Jesus’ baptism. Crew Leaders will rest the tissue “dove” on each child’s fingers and say, “This is my Son who brings me joy!”

When you can see that all kids have had the “dove” rest on them, sound the Wilderness Whistle.

When we wonder, we can... (*trust Jesus!*) because he’s God’s Son! And we can talk to Jesus, too. Will you join me in talking with our friend Jesus now?

**PRAY**

Jesus, thanks for welcoming our wonderings. You really are God’s Son, and we can trust that you love and care for us, no matter what. One thing we never have to wonder about is your love. Thanks, Jesus. In your special name we pray, amen.

## Wrap Up the Adventure

**SAY**

We’ll hear more about trusting Jesus throughout our time at True North. Right now it’s time for a snack!

Dismiss Crews to wash their hands for snack time at Tundra Treats.



## Day 1



Share the exciting news that Jesus is coming, just as John did!

## Day 2



Use pom-poms to explore Jesus' teachings about a shepherd caring for his sheep and God caring for his people.

## Day 3



Follow orders like soldiers, and hear how a powerful man trusted in Jesus' power.

## Day 4



Put stickers on a paper cross to discover how Jesus brought the hope of life forever when he took our wrong choices onto the cross.

## Day 5



Catch whirling paper pieces to celebrate the Holy Spirit—a helper who arrived with wind and fire!



### Questions:

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VBS Programming



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