

**DAY 3**  
**VBS**  
CROCK BRIDGE



# STELLAR SMALL GROUP

ELEMENTARY LEADER GUIDE

# DURING STELLAR

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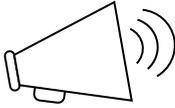
## Get Crew Leaders involved!

Guide Crew Leaders to participate right along with kids. When Crew Leaders listen, get involved, and have fun, kids do too!



## Call on kids to help.

Every day, allow kids who are paying attention to pass out supplies, read Scripture, or be your helper. Kids love feeling important and helpful!



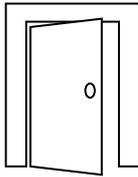
## Use an attention-getting signal.

Attention-getting signals let kids know when it's time to stop what they're doing and look at you. Examples include: **Leader:** "1, 2, 3... Eyes on me!" **Kids:** "1, 2... Eyes on you!"

**Leader:** "If you hear me, clap once!" (Clap once and wait.) "If you hear me, clap twice!" (Clap twice and wait.)

**Leader:** "Mission control to crew!"

**Kids:** "Ready for launch!" (Sit up straight and freeze like astronauts preparing for takeoff.)



## Gather outside the room first.

Gathering kids outside the room allows you to set the scene before they even enter the room and gives you the opportunity to create a big "wow" all at once.



## Repeat the daily Main Point often.

Every activity focuses on one memorable Bible truth called the Main Point. Repeating the Main Point helps kids remember it and apply it to their lives after VBS.



## Repeat expectations often and explain transitions.

Repeating expectations helps kids remember what is expected of them, creating a structured and positive learning environment. Clear transitions between activities prevent confusion and help kids shift their focus smoothly. When we take time to explain what's happening next, kids feel more secure and ready to engage.



Shine Jesus' light!

# TOKENS

This year, our kids will participate in a Token Challenge! To recognize and encourage meaningful participation and positive behavior, we will be rewarding kids with tokens throughout VBS!

- **Who is giving out tokens:** All of our volunteers will receive tokens to reward kids as they catch them engaging well in VBS.
- **What are we doing with the tokens:** Kids will work together to reach an Overall Token Goal and receive a celebration on the last night of VBS! Tokens are used to reward kids for remarkable expressions of love, kindness, great listening, participation, and memorizing our Main Points and Bible verse!
- **When are we passing out tokens:** Immediately! We want to help kids connect their positive attitudes, behaviors, and participation with the reward of the token, so as soon as you see a behavior to celebrate, pass out the reward!
- **Where are we getting tokens from:** We will have tokens available for all volunteers at check-in each night. As we use up our stash, there will be designated spots to go to for more throughout the night.
- **How do we distribute tokens:** Our volunteers will keep their eyes and ears tuned in to our kids so they can immediately reward them with a token to celebrate what we want repeated! They will praise the specific behavior that earned the reward when we give them their token. For example:
  - Active engagement during each rotation
  - Invite kids to “Show Me What You Know!” and let them earn a token by sharing the memory verse, finishing the lyrics to a worship song, sharing today’s “Main Point”, etc.
  - Displays of the fruit of the spirit - love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, self-control, gentleness
  - Demonstrating good manners, listening attentively, and following instructions the first time they're asked
  - Being respectful to volunteers, peers, and the VBS environment.
- **When do kids turn in their tokens:** There will be buckets available at each rotation for kids to drop their tokens in. All tokens will be brought to the closing session and combined so we can see how we're progressing towards our goal each night!
- **Remember, the goal of using tokens is to reinforce positive behaviors,** encourage active participation, and create a fun and rewarding experience for all kids attending VBS. Thank you for your commitment to making VBS a memorable and impactful event!

# SHARING THE GOSPEL WITH KIDS

**The word gospel means “good news.”  
It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and  
salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.**

## **The Goal: Consistent, Frequent, and Low-Pressure**

Kids can trust Christ as Savior, and many of them do! Often, the ones who trust Him have heard consistent and frequent explanations of the gospel at home and church. However, young children are very eager to please adults, so we must be careful of what we say and how we present the Gospel. The child should take the initiative. We will avoid directly asking a child if he or she wants to trust Christ as Savior, unless the child has been asking questions and showing clear signs of readiness to make this decision. We will also avoid invitations where kids raise their hand or come to the front of the room to show their desire to trust Christ. Not only do children want to please adults, but they are also prone to copy the behavior of other children. Instead, we will give children the opportunity to talk to a leader or ask questions.

## **You Are A Gospel Seed Planter**

Overall, you should see your evangelistic role as a gospel seed planter. You are laying a foundation of biblical truth and repeating the gospel message clearly, consistently and frequently, so kids will be prepared to understand and receive the gospel when they are ready. Children often need to hear the gospel message many times before they can understand and respond to it.

### **What to say:**

-  **GOD RULES.** The Bible tells us God created everything, including you and me, and He is in charge of everything. (Genesis 1:1; Revelation 4:11; Colossians 1:16-17)
-  **WE SINNED.** Since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God’s punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)
-  **GOD PROVIDED.** God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It’s something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. (John 3:16; Ephesians 2:8-9)
-  **JESUS GIVES.** Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God’s family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! (Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 3:18)
-  **WE RESPOND.** We can respond to Jesus. The ABCs of Becoming a Christian(see next page) is a simple tool that helps us remember how to respond when prompted by the Holy Spirit to receive the gift Jesus offers.

# THE GOSPEL PRESENTATION

**A,B,C:** (Admit, Believe, Confess)

**Admit** that we have sinned and need God's forgiveness.

**Believe** that Jesus died for our sins and rose again.

**Confess** that Jesus is Lord and choose to follow Him

## On Tuesday (Day 3)

### In 2nd-5th Grade Small Groups:

During the lesson, Station Leaders will share the Gospel. See *page 3 in the SG Leader Guide* for explanations of how to share the Gospel.

Kids will use the Response Card to share their thoughts about following Jesus. They will tell us they want to Wait, they Already follow Jesus, they are Ready to follow, or they have Questions about it.

Crew Leaders will collect the cards as kids finish and let Station Leaders know who in their crew has Questions or is Ready to follow Jesus. Station Leaders will lead any kids who have *Questions* or are *Ready* to step into the hallway and have an in-person conversation with one of the counselors.

Prayer Requests - Give to prayer team to pray over (send cards, if manageable)

Follow Jesus - give to a designated spiritual counselor to have a one-on-one conversation with the kid

Baptism - give to a designated spiritual counselor to have a one-on-one conversation with the kid

As crews finish collecting responses from their kids, the Station Leader will pass out the next activity. This will give kids something to work on quietly while other crews are still responding.

Counselors will take their kids back to their crews when they are done talking.

Station Leaders will turn in their entire stack of cards to \_\_\_\_\_ (who for your campus?) so that each kid can be appropriately followed up with in the weeks to come.

**Children's Ministers will preselect spiritually mature leaders to be available in the halls to have one-on-one conversations with kids about their next steps!**



## The light of Jesus rescues us!

**Bible Story:** Jesus died on the Cross and rose again! (John 19–20)

**Bible Verse:** “Don’t let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God.” (John 14:1)

### Leader Insights

- Jesus repeatedly spoke words of comfort and kindness from the cross. He forgave his captors (Luke 23:34), welcomed a thief (Luke 23:43), and gave his mother into John’s care (John 19:26-27). His words from the cross offered a glimmer of light in an otherwise dismal and dark day.
- In Luke 2:34-35, Simeon held the infant Jesus and spoke a prophecy and blessing to Jesus’ parents. Ending his message, he turned to Mary and said, “And a sword will pierce your very soul.” Perhaps his words foreshadowed Mary’s heartbreaking grief at the cross.
- Romans used crucifixion to send a grisly message of their power and authority. While Jesus succumbed to death on a cross, ultimately he displayed *his* uncontested power—even over death!
- Joseph of Arimathea could have been excommunicated from the synagogue for his support of Jesus. Instead, he boldly gave Jesus a burial fit for a king. Royal burials used large amounts of myrrh and aloes. Joseph and Nicodemus used a whopping 75 pounds of the mixture as they tenderly prepared Jesus for burial.

### Why It Matters Today

As we share the message of the gospel with kids, a message of hope is important because, even at a young age, they experience sadness, fear, and uncertainty. They might feel lonely, struggle with friendships, face disappointments, or deal with loss. Knowing that Jesus’ light shines even in the darkest moments gives them a solid foundation to hold onto.



Hope in Jesus means that they are never alone, that God’s love never changes, and that there is always a reason to keep going, even when life is hard. It reminds them that sadness and tough times won’t last forever—Jesus has already won the victory, and His love brings joy and peace. Just like a bright star shines in the night sky, Jesus’ light is always there to guide them, no matter what they face.

## Day 3 Supplies:



- Day 3 Posters
- Bright, LED Flicker Lights/battery-operated tea lights (1/kid/rotation)
- containers (1 per Crew in a rotation)
- large wooden cross (1/station)
- **Next Step Cards (1/kid)**
- smocks (1/kid/rotation)
- ping pong balls (1/kid/rotation)
- Electric Hot Knife Cutter
- tray/ disposable pie pans
- various paint colors
- parchment paper (1 sheet per crew)
- **Day 3 Main Point Label (1/kid)**
- sharpie (1/crew)
- 1-2 table-top fans (to help paint dry)
- table (for drying)

## Before You Blast Off

- Display Day 3 Posters
- Any windows should still be covered with black plastic from Day 1.
- Prepare a few containers of flicker lights so you can pass out flicker lights quickly as kids enter.
- Prepare a Next Steps area with the wooden cross near it.
- Using the hot blade or knife, make a small hole on each ping pong ball. It should be big enough for the top part of the tea lights. (test the fit before continuing).
- Split up ping pong balls and trays of paint per Crew so it is easy to distribute. Consider a couple trays per crew.
- Right before rotations, drizzle each tray with some paint colors. Choose your different color combinations. **Make sure to drizzle thin lines, avoiding big blotches of paint so it will dry quickly.**
- Portion out parchment paper, enough for each Crew/Rotation.
- Test different kinds of paint to choose the best drying time (acrylic or chalk paint is suggested)

### SPACESHIP TIP

Buy your flicker lights first, and use them as a guide to create the holes in the ping pong balls!



**VBS @ ROCK BRIDGE SMALL GROUP PLAYLIST**

## SPACESHIP TIP

For a more powerful experience, memorize the script so you can leave the room completely dark during that portion.



## Welcome Crews

**SUPPLIES:** Flicker Lights\* (1/kid/rotation), container (1 per Crew in a rotation)

Greet Crews warmly outside your room.

**SAY** **Yesterday was such a happy story! Jesus' light shined bright as he paraded down the road on a donkey with everyone cheering and praising him.**

Hold up a Flicker Light, turned on.

**These lights remind me of our awesome, joyful celebration yesterday! Let's hold them up and cheer as we go into our room!**

Have Crew Leaders help you distribute Flicker Lights, giving one to each person.

Kids turn on the Flicker Lights and then enter the room, waving the lights overhead and cheering.

Crews gather on their blankets.

## Huddle Around the Light

**SAY** **Wow! All that noise is a great way to shine Jesus' light. Today we are learning **The light of Jesus rescues us!**** Turn off the lights in the room.

**But the excitement about Jesus quickly turned dark, a little scary, and sad. Scoot in close to your Crew members. Put those lights in a pile in the middle so you have some light, sort of like a campfire. Pause while Crews huddle closer together.**

**Remember the people who got mad about Jesus accepting praise yesterday? Those religious leaders had a long history of not liking Jesus. They didn't believe he was really God's Son. In fact, they thought it was such a big, awful lie that Jesus should *die* for calling himself the Son of God. But Jesus *is* God's Son! But they wanted Jesus' light to stop shining. Reach in and pull one light in front of you. Pause. Shake your head "no."**

**Cover your light with one hand.** Pause, demonstrating what you mean.

**It was bad enough that the *religious leaders* wanted to hurt Jesus. They'd always been suspicious of him. But one of his followers—a close friend—betrayed and turned against him. Put your other hand over your light. Pause and demonstrate.**

**It was a dark time.**

## Make a Crown

**SAY** **Soldiers arrested Jesus and pressed a crown of sharp thorns on his head. It was their way of hurting him and teasing him for saying he was a king.**

In the middle of your Crew, make a circle with your lights. This reminds us of the crown. **Pause.**

The soldiers hit Jesus with a heavy whip.

Let's try something. Put your hand where you have a scab or a scar—a place you've been hurt. **Pause** and put a hand on a scar you have. If you don't have one right now, touch a place where you've had one before. Put your hand on your heart. Or maybe you'll touch your heart as you think of a time someone hurt your heart. **Pause.**

The people didn't just hurt Jesus' body. They teased him. Then the guards and religious leaders called for Jesus to die. They said he was a liar—that he couldn't be God's Son.

Jesus knows what mean, hurtful words feel like. You do, too. They don't hurt your body, but they hurt your heart and make you sad. Take a light and hold it in your palm. Hold your light in your palm to demonstrate.

Silently talk with Jesus about a time you felt sad that people made fun of you and what Jesus must have felt like.

Allow kids to reflect for about 30 seconds.

## Gather Around the Cross

**SUPPLIES:** large, wooden cross

**SAY**

The leaders decided to put Jesus to death on a wooden cross. They made Jesus carry his heavy cross up a hill. Stand up and hold your light in your outstretched palm. Hold your arm straight in front of you. Hold out a light to demonstrate.

You're holding a small light. Jesus' broken body carried a big, heavy cross. Feel your arm get heavier and more tired. **Pause.** Sadness can make us feel tired and weary, too. We've felt that way; so has Jesus. Jesus understands.

Up on the hill, they nailed Jesus' hands and feet to a cross.

Let's make a big circle. Guide kids in moving into a large circle, all Crews together.

We'll use our lights to make one big cross. Point to the wooden cross, guide Crews in working to set their lights in the middle of the circle in the shape of a cross.

Everyone will sit around the cross.

## Complete Darkness

**SAY**

Soldiers divided up Jesus' clothes and other belongings. They took his things for themselves. Boy Crew members—not Crew Leaders—each of you reach in and turn off one light. **Pause.**



### SPACESHIP TIP

Encourage Crew Leaders to watch for kids who place their hands on their hearts. This is a great insight into what kids might be feeling or struggling with.



Girl Crew members—not Crew Leaders—reach in and turn off one light. Pause.

Jesus said, “It is finished.” Then he died.

Crew Leaders, turn off a light near you so all the lights are out.

Jesus had once said, “I am the light of the world.” But that day, no light shined.

Pause and allow several seconds of silence.

## ☩ Shine Jesus!

**SAY**

It might seem like Jesus died because bad people did bad things to him. But Jesus dying was a part of God’s plan. We all do wrong things, and that means we can’t be friends with God. That made God sad! He wanted to make sure we *could* be friends with him. So Jesus died to take our punishment. Now we can be friends with God when we believe in Jesus.

Here’s what’s even better: Jesus has the power to overcome death!

Crew Leaders and kids, reach in and take a light but keep it turned off. Take a light.

Joseph wrapped Jesus’ body in cloths and put it in a tomb—a cave. People sealed the cave with a big, heavy stone. Cover the light with your cupped hands. Cup your hands around an unlit light.

Three days later, Jesus’ friend Mary came to the tomb. But something was different. That heavy stone was moved! Move your top hand off the light. Demonstrate.

Mary ran to get Peter and John. Jump up and run with me. Hold your light tightly! Run in place for a few seconds.

Peter and John came running. Run some more, then let kids sit.

Feel your heart. Pause. I wonder if *their* hearts were racing, too! What was going on?

They went into the tomb and found the cloths that had been wrapped around Jesus’ body—but *only* the cloths! There was no sign of Jesus in the tomb! Put the hand that’s holding the light behind your back.

Hide your light behind your back.

But Mary still felt sad. She thought someone had moved or stolen Jesus’ body. After all, no one comes back to *life*! Right?

She stood outside the tomb crying. Then she saw a gardener who asked her why she was crying. She explained why, thinking maybe *he* had moved the body.



**SAY**

The gardener simply said her name: “Mary!” On the count of three, let’s all say our own names. As you do, turn on that light behind your back. Ready? 1, 2, 3. Say your name and turn on the Flicker Light that’s hidden behind your back.

When Mary heard her name, she realized it wasn’t a gardener! Sometimes when people understand something, we say, “A lightbulb went on!” or maybe you’ve seen that in a cartoon—when someone gets an idea, a lightbulb appears over their head. That’s a little like what happened to Mary. Hold your light over your head. Hold up your light.

It was Jesus! Jesus was alive! Mary gave him a big hug. Hug yourself! Hug yourself.

Then she ran to tell all his friends she had seen Jesus—alive! Lead kids in running in place again.

Turn on the room lights.

Wow! Jesus took our sins with him to the grave, to rescue and save us!

## Celebrate

**SAY**



Our story went from bright and cheery to dark and grim. But it didn’t stay that way. Jesus is alive today! That means that no matter what we do, Jesus’ death was enough to take our punishment and save us!

### **The light of Jesus rescues us!**

Because Jesus is alive, we can always shine his light! No matter what we do or what happens, Jesus can help us shine with his love.

Come back tomorrow to find out how Jesus’ friends kept his light shining, even after Jesus went back to heaven.

Because Jesus is alive, His light shines in the darkness, and the light of Jesus rescues us!

Now, set your flicker light down and take a sticky note. Write your name on it, and when you’re ready, place it on our Next Steps Wall as a way of showing your decision. Crew Leaders, if any of your kids have questions about following Jesus or baptism, bring them to me at the door.



## Next Steps:

**Older kids (2nd grade and up)** will have an opportunity to ask questions and respond to the Gospel. There will be counselors available during this time. Each kid will respond on the Next Steps wall today.

If they indicate they want to follow Jesus or get baptized, you will guide them to one of the counselors in the hallway. The counselors will fill out a response card and kids will go home with a letter to their parents.

### SAY

We heard some really good and really important news today! God created each one of us to have a relationship with Him, but from the very beginning, people have chosen to go their own way instead of following God's perfect plan. Just like how today started with light but then turned dark, sin separates us from God and leaves us in darkness—we can't fix that on our own.

Today, we learned how Jesus, the Son of God, willingly died on the cross to take the punishment for our sins. It seemed like all hope was lost, and for three days, there was darkness and sadness. But then, something amazing happened—Jesus rose from the dead!

Hold up your flicker light. This little light reminds us that we need something outside of ourselves to shine the way. Now, cover the light with your hands. Without Jesus, we're stuck in darkness. But Jesus is the Light of the World! Because of what He did, our light doesn't have to stay covered—His love can shine through us.

The Bible tells us in Romans 3:23 that everyone has sinned, but the good news is that Jesus made a way for us to be forgiven! Because Jesus is alive, we can be friends with God forever when we trust in Him.

From the very beginning, God planned to send Jesus to rescue us from sin (God provided). Jesus is the only person who never sinned, and He made a way for us to be saved by dying on the cross. He took the punishment that we all deserve for our sins (Jesus gives). But the story didn't end there—God raised Jesus from the dead, proving that He has power over everything! Because of Jesus, we can be forgiven and live forever with God.

We can respond to this amazing truth by putting our trust in Jesus as our Savior and Lord (We respond). The initials A-B-C help us remember how to respond:

Admit that we have sinned and need God's forgiveness.  
Believe that Jesus died for our sins and rose again.  
Confess that Jesus is Lord and choose to follow Him.

## Flicker Light Planets

**SUPPLIES:** ping pong balls (1/kid/rotation), hot blade or knife, tray/disposable pie pans, various paint colors, parchment paper (1 sheet per crew), **Day 3 Main Point Label** (1/kid), tape, sharpie (1/crew), table (for drying), 2-3 table-top fans (for drying)

**SAY**

Today we get to take our flicker lights home, but we are going to make something awesome to remind us that **The light of Jesus' rescues us!**

Instruct kids to gently set their ping pong balls in the tray and tilt the container to paint them. This method will help create abstract designs on each ping pong ball.

Place the ping pong balls on the parchment paper to dry.

God loves us so much that he sent his Son, Jesus, to die on the cross for us. Jesus died and took the punishment for all the wrong things we do. But Jesus is stronger than death, and he came back to life! Jesus wants to be our friend forever.

When we ask him to, he'll take forgive us for all the wrong things we've done and fill our lives with his love. Jesus will always be with us and will help us make the right choices. When we believe in Jesus and ask him to forgive us, someday we'll live with him forever in heaven.

Before dismissing, instruct Crew Leaders to write kids names on the bottom of each tea light and help kids tape the Day 3 Main Point Label around the base of their flicker light.

Finally, kids will place the ping pong balls on top of each tea light. Turn the light on. Consider placing on a table with fans to dry.

These flicker light planets can be a reminder of the hope we have because **The light of Jesus' rescues us!**

### SPACESHIP TIP

For any kids who may have missed the ping pong ball activity because they were talking to a counselor, have their crews put the ball on the light and write their name on it, they can color or paint at home!

