

CELEBRATE JESUS!

Home Parties for Children

By Nan McCullough

Purpose

To provide a simple, effective way to lead children to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Why?

- Children are in the age group most receptive to the gospel.
- Of a group of 4 to 13 year olds, 32 out of every 100 will respond positively to a call to receive Christ. This number drops to only 4 out of 100 teenagers, and only comes up to 6 out of 100 adults. (Barna Research Group)
- By the year 2010 half of the world's population will be under the age of 18.
- Today only 20 percent of the children in America go to church. We need to reach the other 80 percent in another way.
- Why not help these children prepare for eternity when they are young - with most of their lives still in front of them?

What is a Celebrate Jesus! Party?

This is an informal gathering of children to view the “The Story of Jesus for Children” video with the purpose of leading them to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. The party can be held at Christmas, Easter or any other time of year.

This is an opportunity to gather the unchurched children, in an informal, non-threatening arena. Today’s “latchkey” children are eager to come into a traditional home and have some fun with their peers. What’s more fun than popcorn and a movie? Add a couple of games until everyone arrives, and end with some special treats and prizes, and you’ve got a sure success with the children and the gospel.

Here’s a chance for moms, dads, singles and young adults to have a dynamic ministry that will count for all eternity. These are the people who drive the car pools, coach the teams, lead scout troops, and those who know all the children in their neighborhoods.

Armed with a few simple tools and “The Story of Jesus for Children” video, they have the opportunity to see young lives changed, young lives which may have impact on the future of our nation and even the world- for Christ.

Benefits

- Uses our homes in a non-threatening environment to glorify God by bringing children to Christ.
- Easy and simple way to share Christ clearly with many children at one time.
- Builds relationships in a fractured world.
- Counteracts the isolation and cocooning of our culture. Many children are never invited into someone's home.
- It has the potential to reach not only the children but also entire families for Christ.

Responsibilities
of the
Hostess/Host

Planning & Preparation

Host/Hostess

Ask friends to partner with you. Work as a team supporting and encouraging each other in prayer, planning, preparation, interaction with children, and follow up.

Children

Prayerfully consider who the Lord wants you to invite. (As you make your list, keep in mind the children who are between 4 and 12 years old and who don't know the Lord). Also include children you think are ready to learn to share their faith. Challenge these little believers to invite their friends: from school on their sports teams, in their scout troops, from their neighborhood.

Many children who normally must go to day care centers after school would love the opportunity to visit a friend's home. Ask their parents if you could pick them up after school.

Getting Your Own Children Involved

- Talk to them about the importance of leading their friends to Christ.
- Help them make an invitation list of their friends and neighbors.
- Let them color the invitations and go with you to help deliver them.
- Enlist their help in getting the party room decorated and ready for the party.
- Let them help you welcome the children as they arrive.
- Let them help you with the refreshments.

Time

Select a time when children will most likely be available. Suggestions: Winter and Spring breaks, Christmas and Easter are natural seasons of time for a party. Also, immediately after school, school holidays, weekends, (or minimum days) when parents have to work.

Setting

- Choose a suitable room in your home to show the video where there will be the least distractions.
- Put away all toys and knick-knacks.
- Lock up pets where they won't be heard. They can distract or scare children.
- Turn the volume down - or the ringer off - on the phone.
- Draw curtains or blinds to darken the room during the video.
- Seat the children on carpeted floor, carpet squares, or throw pillows.

Video

- Review "The Story of Jesus for Children" video prior to the party.
- Day of the party: test your VCR and TV. (Try to have the largest TV possible to show the video.)
- Introduce the video by saying, "What you are about to see is the true story of Jesus. The children in the video are also actors, but their story is only a story that might have happened when Jesus was on earth."
- Assign someone to be responsible for turning off and on the lights for you as soon as you are ready to start and when the video is completely over.
- At the end of the video (after the last person says "... pray with me") have the commitment cards handed out. Then explain what the card is and how to fill it out.

Refreshment Ideas

- Provide a simple treat and drink when they first arrive.
 - Goldfish crackers
 - pretzels
 - popcorn
 - juice or water
- Make or purchase a cake, cupcakes or pizza, depending on time of day and for after the movie.
- At Christmas time, serve a birthday cake that says, “Happy Birthday Jesus” and has candles. Sing “Happy Birthday” before you serve it.
- Use colorful children’s paper or plastic products to create a festive atmosphere.
- You don’t have to spend a lot. The purpose of the food is to aid the celebration, not to be the focus.

Celebrate Jesus!

PARTY SCHEDULE

Greet children and initiate mixer games
10 minutes

Introduce all the children
5 minutes

Show the Video
62 minutes

Close and distribute commitment cards
5 minutes

Serve special refreshments
10 minutes

Say a special goodbye to each child as he or she leaves the party.

Your Celebrate Jesus! Party

Sample Schedules:

Saturday or Sunday Afternoon Party: 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.

2:00 - 2:10	Children arrive and play mixer game or color picture.
2:10 - 2:15	Introduce children and welcome (settle the group down to watch the video).
2:15 - 3:17	Introduce and show the video.
3:17 - 3:20	Make closing remarks; pass out commitment cards and pencils, and announce a "Follow Up Club," if you are going to have one.
3:20 - 3:30	Serve main refreshments.

After-School Party: 3:30 - 5:00 p.m.

3:30 - 3:40	Children arrive and play mixer game or color picture.
3:40 - 3:45	Welcome and introduce children (settle the group down to watch the video).
3:45 - 4:47	Show video.
4:47 - 4:50	Make closing remarks: pass out commitment cards, "Greatest Promise" booklets and pencils, and announce "Follow Up Club," if you are going to have one.
4:50 - 5:00	Serve main refreshments.

Other Suggestions:

1. Allow at least to 90 minutes for your Celebrate Jesus! Party. If it goes longer, add more games, using the time to build loving relationships. This may be the key to seeing children go on with Christ.
2. Play festive children's music in the background as the children arrive. Use special holiday music if appropriate.
3. Some children may be shy or, if they haven't been to something like this before, unsure of themselves. Greet them saying something encouraging like, "Come on in. We can't wait to start the video!"
4. Thank each parent as they drop off each precious child, and suggest the time to return.
5. When the video ends, guide the children through the commitment cards carefully. Make sure they understand what you are telling them to do. Repeat yourself to be sure that everyone is with you. Some children don't have mature listening skills and need things repeated.
6. After you are sure all are finished with their cards; tell them to keep the bottom portion, in a special place (their Bibles) to remind them of this special event.
7. Have a basket or decorated special box, and ask a child to go around with it, being sure to get a card from each child, even your own children.
8. Give a copies of the "Greatest Promise" booklets as souvenirs to help them remember "The Story of Jesus for Children" video, their special commitment and the enable those who didn't pray that day to have another opportunity later on at home, as the Holy Spirit leads.

Appendix

Appendix Items

- Item 1. Sample Invitations:
 - Generic Year-Round Invitation
 - Easter Invitation
 - Christmas/Birthday Party for Jesus
- Item 2. Door Hangers
- Item 3. Name Tags
- Item 4. Coloring Pictures
- Item 5. Mixer Game
- Item 6. Review Games (for after the video)
- Item 7. Sample Commitment Card
- Item 8. Follow-up Resources and Contact Information

Duplicating Instructions and Directions for Appendix Items

1. Invitations:

- Choose an invitation to correspond with the time of year that you are having your party. You can use traditional invitations or door hangers. You may want to use both; hand delivering or mailing the traditional ones and leaving door hangers at homes.
- Copy on bright colored paper or white paper if your child will be coloring the cartoons on them. Fold the invitations in half and then in half again.
- Print the door hangers on card stock. Print the “note to parents” on back side of the door hangers. (Cut out the holes on dotted lines)

2. Name Tags:

- Print the name tags on Avery label paper #5162 so that you can peel and press a label on each child. (The graphics are set up to fit perfectly.)
- If this is not available, print the name tags on colored paper and attach to the children with SAFETY pins.

3. Coloring Pages and Mixer Games

- Have crayons or coloring markers and pencils available for children to use.
- Choose the page you want for your party according to the time of year your party will take place, and have that copied.
- Copy mixer game for older children to play as guests arrive. Each child will need one. They should circulate and ask questions trying to get at least one appropriate name for each box.
- Copy Review Game sheet that does not have answers on it. Give the children a few minutes to fill in the answers, then give tell them the answers. You may want to give a prize to the one who got the most correct.

4. Commitment Cards (Promise Card)

- Print and cut apart. Have one for every child present.

5. Order extra “**Greatest Promise**” booklets (see Order Form at the end.)

When the party is over, give one to each child to take home. These are great follow-up pieces and will enable those who didn't pray that day to make a decision for Christ later on at home, as the Holy Spirit leads.

Come See the Greatest Story Ever

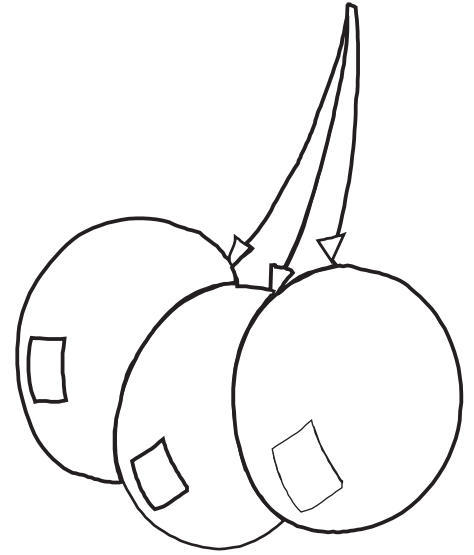
a neighborhood party
for kids!

Date:

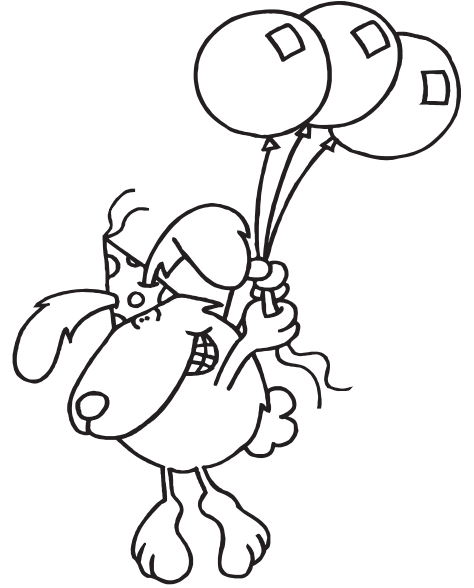
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Celebrate!



Parents, you are welcome to celebrate with us as we watch a special video about the life of Jesus based on the Gospel of Luke! Children are given a concrete understanding of how a person develops a friendship with God. This "Celebration" for children is affiliated with Campus Crusade for Christ, which is interdenominational, and international.

You are
invited to...

Christmas



Celebrate

You're invited
to a Birthday Party
for Jesus

Given By:

Address:

Time:

Date:

Parents, you are welcome to celebrate with us as we watch a special video about the life of Jesus based on the Gospel of Luke! Children are given a concrete understanding of how a person develops a friendship with God. This "Celebration" for children is affiliated with Campus Crusade for Christ, which is interdenominational, and international.

Come See the Greatest Story Ever Told!

Come See the Greatest Story Ever Told!

Date:

Time:

Address:

Given By:

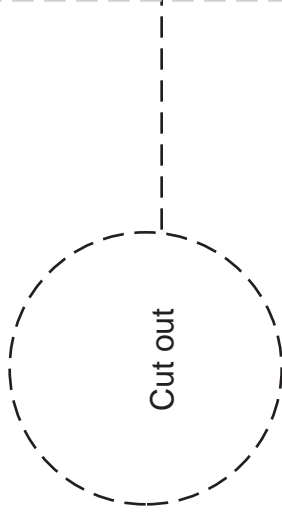
Let's go back
before bunnies,
chicks and eggs
and hear the
Greatest Story
Ever Told!



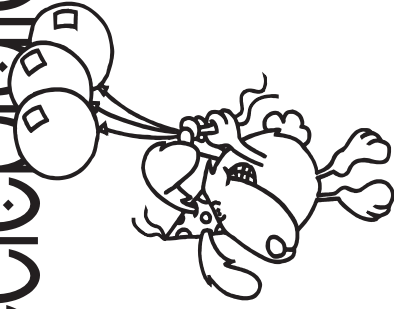
Come Find
Out what
Easter's All
About!

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You're Invited to...



Celebrate



A Neighborhood Party
for Kids

Given By:

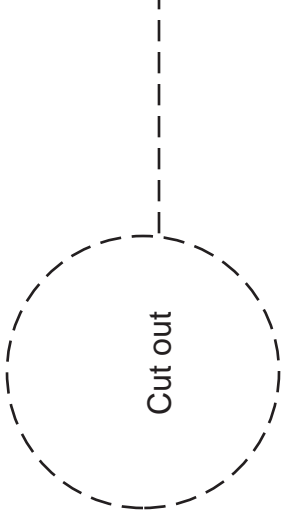
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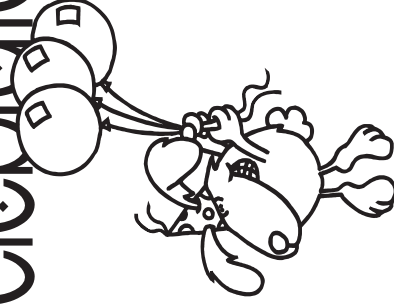
Date:

Come See the Greatest Story Ever Told!

You're Invited to...



Celebrate



A Neighborhood Party
for Kids

Given By:

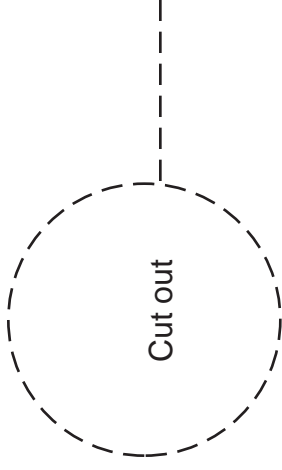
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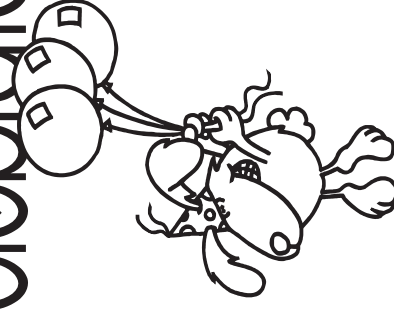
Date:

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You're Invited to...



Celebrate



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for Kids

Given By:

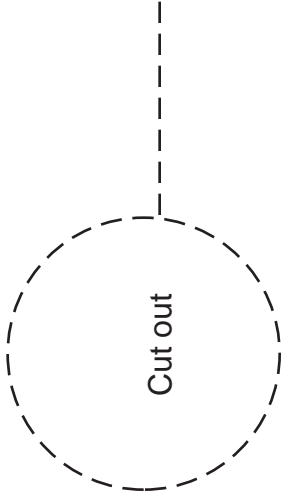
Address:

Time:

Date:

Come See the Greatest Story Ever Told!

You're Invited to...



Celebrate



A Birthday Party
for Jesus

Given By:

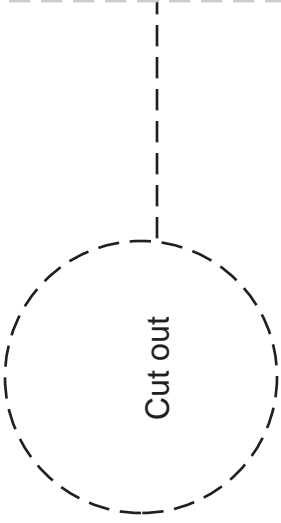
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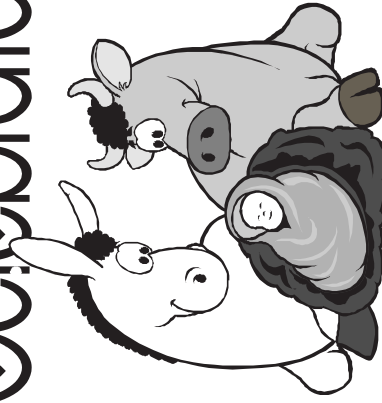
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You're Invited to...



Celebrate



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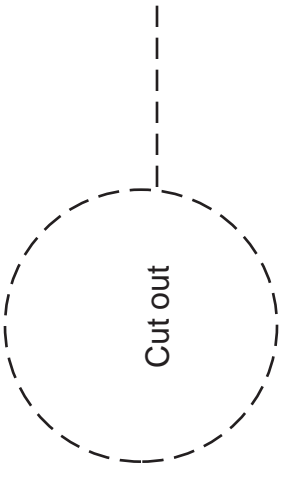
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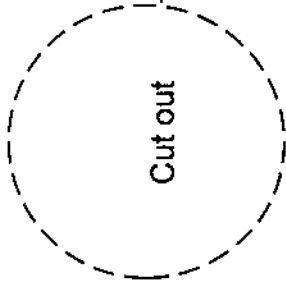
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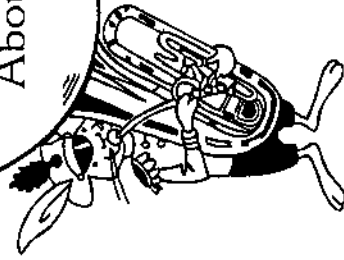
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You're Invited



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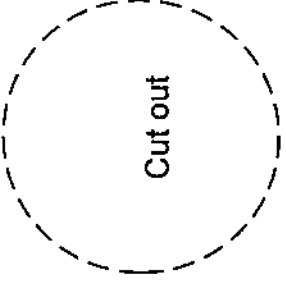
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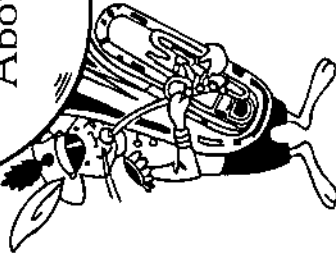
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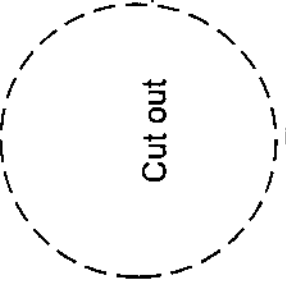
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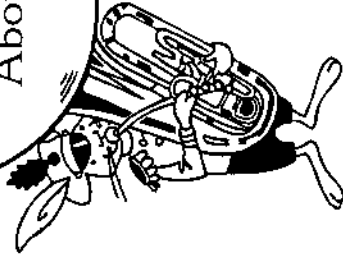
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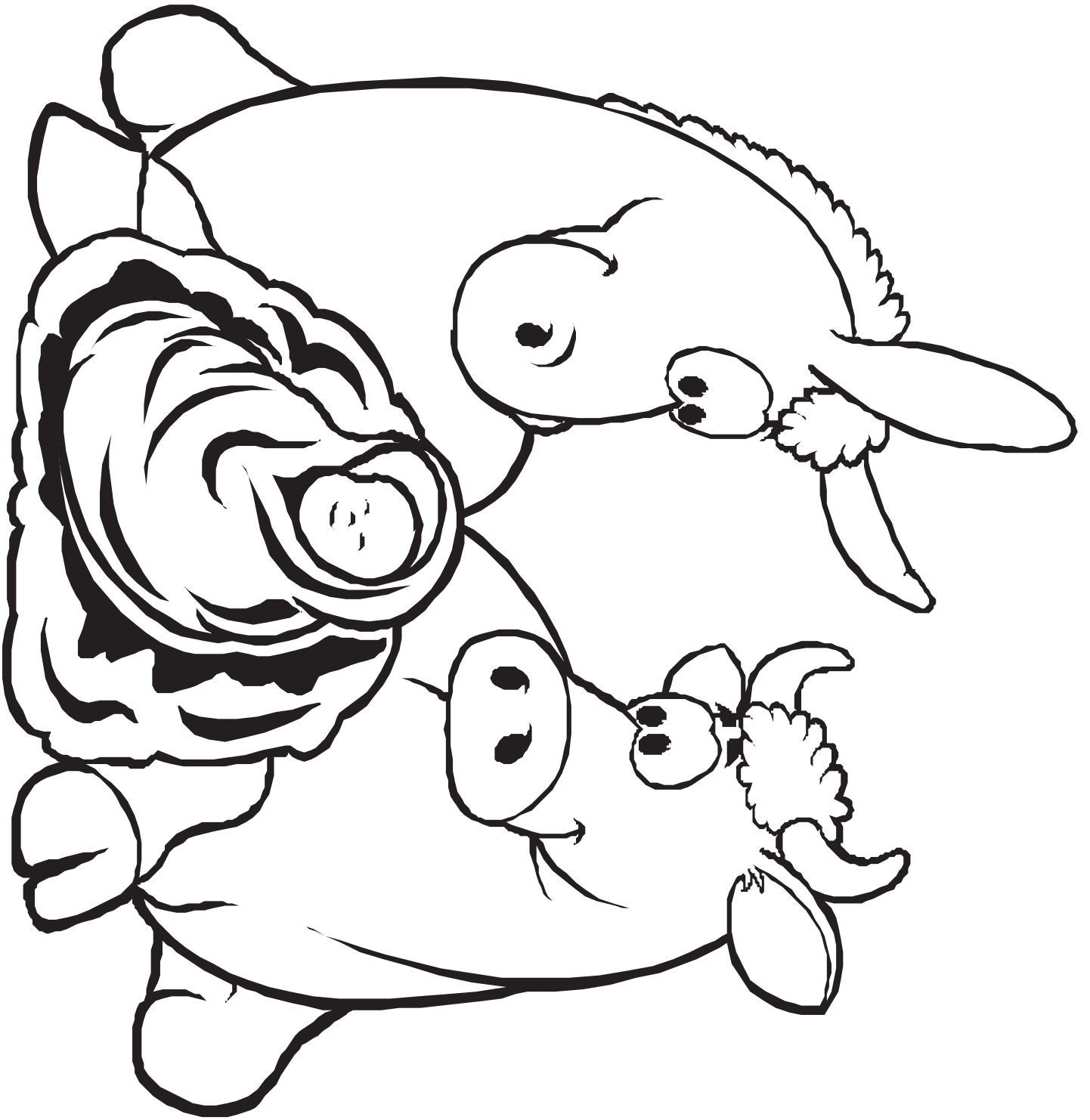
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Mixer Game

Who has a dog? Dog's name:	Who has an older sister? How old is she?	Who has seen a movie about Jesus? What was it called?	
Who has been to a zoo? What was their favorite animal at the zoo?	Who has the longest name?	Who can speak another language? What is the Language?	
Who has a cat? Cat's name:	Who plays soccer?	Who has a grandmother that lives with them?	
Who is youngest?	Who is oldest?	Who has the shortest name?	Who has a baby brother?

Review Game for Longer Parties

- 1. Where was Jesus born?**
(In a stable.)
- 2. How was Jesus able to heal all those sick people?**
(Because He was God.)
- 3. Why did Jesus have to come?**
(Because we sin.)
- 4. Why did Jesus die on the cross?**
(As a payment for our sin.)
- 5. How many people sin?**
(All)
- 6. How do we invite Jesus into our lives?**
(By praying and asking Him to come in.)
- 7. What was your favorite part of the video?**

Promise Card

(Commitment Card)

- I prayed today to ask Jesus to live in me.
- I already asked Jesus to live in me.
- I am not ready to ask Jesus into my life.
- I would like to learn more about Jesus.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____

STATE: _____

ZIP: _____

BOY GIRL AGE: _____

PHONE: (_____) _____

Please give to your Teacher or Parent

Cut or Tear Here

My Prayer

Today I prayed this prayer:

Dear God,
I believe Jesus is Your Son. Thank you
that Jesus died on the cross for all the
wrong things I have thought and said
and done. Please forgive me for my sins. I ask
Jesus to be with me and to live in me
always. Help me to be the kind of person
You want me to be. Thank you for
answering my prayer. Amen.

My Name: _____

Date: _____

Keep in your Bible

Promise Card

(Commitment Card)

- I prayed today to ask Jesus to live in me.
- I already asked Jesus to live in me.
- I am not ready to ask Jesus into my life.
- I would like to learn more about Jesus.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____

STATE: _____

ZIP: _____

BOY GIRL AGE: _____

PHONE: (_____) _____

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always. Help me to be the kind of person
You want me to be. Thank you for
answering my prayer. Amen.

My Name: _____

Date: _____

Keep in your Bible



Jesus And Me Everyday

When you ask Jesus to forgive you and invite Him to be with you, He really is with you now and always. He always keeps His promises. In the Bible Jesus makes many promises to help you be certain about your relationship with Him. Here are two of His promises:

“I am with you always” (Matthew 28:20).
“I will never leave you” (Hebrews 13:5).

As you begin this new life with God and His Son Jesus, God will help you make the right choices. Here is another promise from God’s book, the Bible:

“God is working in you to help you want to do what pleases Him. Then He gives you the power to do it” (Philippians 2:13).

Bible Verses from International Children’s Bible

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Bible Verses from International Children’s Bible

Contact Information Sheet

Have children who are interested sign up to join the “Child Evangelism Fellowship (CEF) Mailbox Club” correspondence course. You may call CEF at 636-4456-4321. Ask for the “Mailbox Club.”
Web site: www.eboxclub.com

You can order free Bibles for those who need them by writing:
Bibles for Children Inc.
1054 State Hwy 41
Afton, NY 13730
or call: 607-639-2726

“The Story of Jesus For Children” Web site:

www.jesusforchildren.org

Here you can print “Follow-Up” materials free.
Click on “teacher guide.” Or call