

# DIXIE JACKSON ARKANSAS MISSIONS OFFERING

# CHILDREN LESSON PLAN

## PRAYER

- Ask God to give you insight as you read His Word and prepare your lesson.
- Pray for a clear understanding of how the Holy Spirit leads you to respond personally to the 2019 Dixie Jackson Arkansas Missions Offering and Week of Prayer.
- Pray for each child in your group to be attentive and responsive during your meeting.
- Pray for the children to understand that even one person can change the world for Christ.

## PREP

- Explore the 2019 Dixie Jackson Arkansas Missions Offering and Week of Prayer resources available at [absc.org/dixiejackson](http://absc.org/dixiejackson). Read the theme introduction; review the planning guide; learn about the ministries spotlighted and watch the ministry videos; find printable and templates to copy for class time.
- Read John 1:35–42, along with the lesson plan.
- Prepare supplies for class time. You'll need:
  - Praise music to play as children arrive
  - Copies of "It Starts With One" word search and "Pray for The Bridge Church" coloring pages
  - Pencils and crayons
  - A scarf or bandana to make a blindfold
  - 15–20 sheets of construction paper
  - Scotch tape
  - Enough Bibles for each child to have one
  - Picture of Dixie Jackson
  - A set of dominos
  - Copies of "Letter to Bridge Church Kids" activity sheet
- **Optional activity**—cotton balls

- On the day/evening of your meeting, arrive early enough to:
  - Tape a construction-paper maze onto the floor
  - Lay out coloring sheets, word-search puzzles, pencils and crayons for kids who arrive early.
  - Set up dominos:
    - During the lesson, you'll use dominos for an object lesson to help the children think about how one person sharing the Gospel can make a big difference in many lives. Just for fun, you could cover the first domino in masking tape and draw a smiley face on it with a marker. Set up the dominos in a row or an S-shape so that when you gently tip back the first one, the rest fall down behind it. You might set them up so that they're out of reach of the children, but within easy reach for you during story time.
  - Have praise music playing as the children arrive.

## PLAN

When we're excited to know Jesus, and out of that excitement we simply invite others to know Him too, all of us—including children—can have a powerful impact for the Kingdom of God.

Your goals for group time are to show the children (1) how they can help others know Jesus and (2) how they can be involved with the Dixie Jackson Arkansas Missions Offering.

A large, stylized logo for Dixie Jackson, featuring the words "Dixie Jackson" in a script font, with a large, yellow, leaf-like graphic behind the text.

Dixie Jackson

**Use this lesson plan word-for-word or simply as a guide—however it offers you the best support as you lead.** Feel free to adapt it to your format and time frame, as well as the interest and attention span of your group. The suggested questions are meant to prompt conversation; if you're watching the clock, you might rather choose just a few to focus on.

(By the way, when you ask questions, don't be afraid of silence. Give the children time to sit with the questions and to think before they respond.)

Instructions for two group activities are attached. "Blindfold Maze" is the game you'll use to kick off your Bible study. If there's rec time built into your meeting format, and space available for a rowdier game, "Blob" starts with one person and ends when everyone has been tagged. It's a fun way to reinforce the idea that one person can have a big impact.

**As you greet the children, invite them to work on a word-search puzzle or coloring sheet until everyone has arrived.**

**When you're ready to begin, start with the blindfold maze.**

**When everyone has had a turn to be blindfolded and to be a guide, begin your group time.**

*You could say:* Let's talk about the maze.

- Which did you like better: being blindfolded or being a guide?
- When you had a turn to be the guide, was it fun to be able to help your partner know where to go?
- What would it be like to have to find your way along the path without someone to help you?

All of you were great helpers and awesome guides! The Bible tells us there's a really special and important way we can be guides for people who don't know Jesus. And it's super easy!

**Introduce the story, from John 1:35-42.**

*You could say:* The Bible is divided into two main parts; can anyone tell me what they're called? (The Old Testament and the New Testament)

We're going to read a story from the New Testament, in the book of John. Open your Bibles and let's find the book of John together. Our story is in the first chapter, and it starts in verse 35.

Encourage stronger readers to help those who are still learning.

When we read a story in the Bible, it's always good to know about the parts around the story that help us understand what it means.

Here's what's going on around our story: All the way back in the Garden of Eden, God had promised to send the world a Savior. And God always keeps His promises! People had been waiting for hundreds of years for this Messiah, but no one knew who it would be or what they'd look like.

God knew we'd need some help to recognize the Messiah, Jesus. So when it was time for Jesus to come, God asked a teacher called John the Baptist to preach about Jesus, telling everyone that Jesus is God's Son. John the Baptist was like a guide, helping people to find Jesus.

John the Baptist had a group of people who traveled with him, learning from him about the coming Messiah. One of these people was a guy named Andrew, who must have been paying close attention to what John the Baptist said. Because when Andrew finally met Jesus, he was ready to drop everything and follow Him.

And that's where we pick up the story.

**Check in to be sure everyone's found the passage, then read it to the group:**

"The next day John was there again with two of his followers. He saw Jesus walking by and said, 'Look, the Lamb of God!'

The two followers heard John say this. So they followed Jesus. Jesus turned and saw them following him. He asked, 'What do you want?'

They said, 'Rabbi, where are you staying?' ('Rabbi' means 'Teacher.')

Jesus answered, 'Come with me and you will see.'

So the two men went with Jesus. They saw the place where Jesus was staying and stayed there with Him that day. It was then about four o'clock.

These two men followed Jesus after they heard about him from John. One of the men was Andrew. He was Simon Peter's brother. The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother, Simon. He said to Simon, 'We have found the Messiah.' ('Messiah' means 'Christ.')

—*International Children's Bible*



## Talk about the text.

*You could say:* John the Baptist has an interesting name for Jesus—"the Lamb of God." When he uses that name, he's saying something really important about Jesus, the Messiah: He's telling us that Jesus came to take the punishment for all of our sins.

- Have you heard that before?
- Can you think of some other names for Jesus that we read about in the Bible?

Andrew is so excited to finally meet Jesus and get to know Him!

- What's the very first thing Andrew does after he spends some time with Jesus?

Andrew has something awesome to share because He's been hanging out with the Messiah! Spending time with people and really getting to know them is important to Jesus. Later in John's Gospel (15:15), Jesus calls His disciples "friends," and He considers us His friends, too.

- Is it weird to think of yourself as Jesus's friend? Why or why not?
- Do you think your life would be different if you didn't know anything about Jesus? Why or why not?

## Introduce the 2019 Dixie Jackson Arkansas Missions Offering and Week of Prayer theme, It Starts With One.

*You could say:* Jesus loves being your friend. He wants to be as close to you as the people you hang out with every day. And He wants you to be a guide for people who don't know Him.

That's what a missionary is—someone who knows Jesus, and helps others get to know Him, too.

In the Bible, Andrew is the first person we learn about who brings someone to meet Jesus. Andrew is the very first missionary! What he does is so easy: He just invites his brother to come see Jesus, then shows him the way.

- What are some ways we can be like Andrew?

Jesus wants everyone in the world to know Him. That's a gazillion people!

Draw the children's attention to the first domino in the line-up (the smiley face).

But pretend this is you. Every time you help one person know Jesus, and that person helps someone else know Him, and that person helps someone else know Him ...

Gently knock the first domino back so that all the others fall behind it.

... you're helping to change the world for Jesus!

If time and interest allow, you could reinforce the object lesson by letting the children take turns setting the dominos up and gently knocking them down.

## Explain how Arkansas Baptists partner with one another through the Dixie Jackson Arkansas Missions Offering and Week of Prayer to support ministry in our state.

*You could say:* There are Baptist churches like ours all over Arkansas working together to share about Jesus and change Arkansas for Him. Every year, we collect money together, and pray together, and help people together so that everyone in Arkansas can know how much Jesus loves them.

We collect money in a special offering that's named for a woman who lived in Arkansas a long time ago. Her name was Dixie Jackson, and she loved Jesus with her whole heart!

Show the children Mrs. Jackson's picture.

Money we give to the Dixie Jackson Arkansas Missions Offering helps buy food for people who don't have enough to eat. It helps build houses for people who need a safe place to live. It helps tell people in prison about Jesus. It helps people learn to read, or go to the doctor or the dentist when they need medical care. It helps repair their homes after big storms have torn them up. It helps people start brand-new churches to share God's love in their town.

## Show the children how they're connected to other Arkansas Baptists and to ministries supported by the Dixie Jackson Arkansas Missions Offering and Week of Prayer by inviting them to write letter or draw a picture for the kids at The Bridge Church.

*You could say:* The Dixie Jackson Arkansas Missions Offering helped people in Wynne start a new church this year. It's called The Bridge Church. The folks at The Bridge Church, including kids like you, are helping lots of people get to know Jesus.

- What do you think it would be like to be part of a new church?

An important part of missions is encouraging and praying for others who are serving Jesus. We can support the kids at The Bridge Church by letting them

know we're excited about their new church and we're praying for them.

Hand out copies of "Letter to Bridge Church Kids" activity sheet; make sure there are crayons and pencils within easy reach.

Take an activity sheet and write a letter or draw a picture for The Bridge Church kids. I'll mail them all to

the pastor, Dustin Clegg.

Gather the letters as the children leave, and mail them to:

Pastor Dustin Clegg  
The Bridge Church  
203 E. Merriman Avenue  
Wynne, Arkansas 72396

## OPTIONAL ACTIVITY

*If time allows here, you could continue with a game of Cotton Ball Toss-Across.*

We get to know Jesus in some of the same ways we get to know the friends we see every day: by spending time with Him, talking with and listening to Him, and learning what's important to Him. The object lesson with this game is that we have to stay close to Jesus in order to connect with Him.

- Divide the group in half, in two lines facing each other; make sure everyone is directly across from a partner. Join the game if you have an uneven number of children.
- Ask both sides to take two elephant steps back so that they're standing at least three or four feet apart.
- Give a cotton ball to everyone in the first line.
- On your signal, the first line tosses their cotton balls across to their partners in the other line. Their partners must try to catch the cotton balls without moving closer, but they won't be able to do it.
- Let the partners in the second line quickly pick the cotton balls up off the floor and return to

their line.

- Ask both lines to take a couple mouse steps closer to each other.
- On your signal, the second line tosses their cotton balls back to their partners in the first line.
- Repeat until the lines are close enough for the children in one to be able to catch the cotton ball their partner tosses to them. They'll probably have to be pretty close!

When the game is over, talk with the kids about the challenge of the game.

- Why was it hard to catch the cotton ball at first?
- Was it easier when the lines got closer together?

Help them make the connection that our friendship with Jesus is like that: The closer we get to Him, the better we get to know Him. Ask them to brainstorm some ways we build our friendship with Jesus; if they need prompts, you could suggest praying, reading the Bible, going to church or listening to praise music.

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### • Wrap up your group time prayer.

*You could say:* The Bible tells us that knowing Jesus makes us world-changers. Every one of us can help change someone's life by helping them get to know Jesus.

Let's close our eyes for a minute. I'm going to say "thank you" to Jesus for loving us and being our very best friend. I'm going to ask Him to take good care of The Bridge Church, and to show us some ways that we can help others know Him right here in our town. While I pray out loud, you can pray along silently.

## OPENING GROUP GAME: BLINDFOLD MAZE

- **Set-Up:** Before the children arrive, make an S-shape or zig-zag maze on the floor in the back of the room. Use 15–20 pieces of construction paper to lay out the path of the maze.
- **To Play:** Ask the children to pair up (if you have an uneven number of students, join the game!) and invite them to line up at the beginning of the maze.
- Give a blindfold to the first pair in line. One partner puts on the blindfold, while the other acts as the guide.
- On your signal, the guide begins to lead their partner along the maze. They can **ONLY** give verbal instructions to help their partner.
- When they've made it to the end of the maze, ask them to hand off the blindfold to the second pair in line.
- When every pair has made it through the maze, ask partners to trade places—as they go through the maze the second time, the guide will wear the blindfold and their partner will be the guide.

## OPTIONAL REC-TIME GAME: BLOB

*If time, weather and/or space allow, play a round before or after Bible study.*

- Choose one student to be “it.”
- Begin the game by yelling, “Go!”
- The children scatter on your signal, and the student who’s “it” begins trying to tag someone.
- As soon as they do, they lock elbows with the person they’ve tagged. Together, they try to tag others.
- Every person who’s tagged locks elbows with the person who tagged them. Elbows have to stay locked throughout the game; only the people on the ends can tag someone.
- The last person captured by the “blob” is the winner.



# MASTER SUPPLY CHECKLIST

As the children arrive:

- ☐ Praise music
- ☐ Copies of "It Starts With One" word search and "Pray for The Bridge Church" coloring page (printables available at [absc.org/dixiejackson](http://absc.org/dixiejackson))
- ☐ Pencils
- ☐ Crayons

For the blindfold maze:

- ☐ Scarf or bandana to make a blindfold
- ☐ 15-20 pieces of construction paper
- ☐ Scotch tape

For the story:

- ☐ Enough Bibles for each child to have one
- ☐ Picture of Dixie Jackson (printable available at [absc.org/dixiejackson](http://absc.org/dixiejackson))
- ☐ Set of dominos
- ☐ Masking tape and a pen for decorating the first domino (optional)

For reaching out to children at The Bridge Church:

- ☐ "Letter to Bridge Church Kids" activity sheets (printable available at [absc.org/dixiejackson](http://absc.org/dixiejackson))
- ☐ Crayons
- ☐ Pencils
- ☐ Manila envelope for mailing the letters to Pastor Dustin Clegg

For Cotton Ball Toss-Across game (optional):

- ☐ Bag of large cotton balls