

VBS 2026 PRESCHOOL OVERVIEW CONFERENCE PLAN (1½ HOURS)

Purpose Statement

This 90-minute conference plan is designed to train and equip VBS preschool leaders to lead Lifeway's Illumination Station® VBS. The resources covered in this session are for preschool ages Babies through Kindergarten.

Needed Resources

- *VBS 2026 Preschool Starter Kit: Babies–Kindergarten* (005852869)
- *VBS 2026 Multi-age Starter Kit* (005852873)
- (2) *VBS 2026 3s–Pre-K Leader Guide* (005853479) — Place one Leader Guide in the Day 1 *VBS 2026 Backpack* (listed below) and the other in the Day 4 *VBS 2026 Backpack*.
- (2) *VBS 2026 Kindergarten Leader Guide* (005853481) — Place one Leader Guide in the Day 2 *VBS 2026 Backpack* and the other in the Day 5 *VBS 2026 Backpack*.
- *VBS 2026 Multi-age Preschool Bible Study Leader Guide* (005853483) — Place in the Day 3 Illumination Station Backpack.
- *VBS 2026 Kindergarten Leader Pack* (005853482) — Gather and prepare items 8, 10, 26, and 37. Hang item 8 on a focal wall. Cut apart and hide item 10 around the room before the session. Photocopy item 37 onto green cardstock (1 set of fish per team) and cut apart. Photocopy item 26 (1 per every 2 conferees) and cut apart along the dotted lines.
- *VBS 2026 String Flags* (005853579)
- *VBS 2026 Supersized Backdrop* (005853613)
- (5) *VBS 2026 Backpack* (005853574) — Designate one backpack for each day (Day 1–5). Place the appropriate day's "Daily Overview" (Item 2) and leader guide (see above) in each backpack.
- *VBS 2026 Tablecloths* (005853575)
- Item 1: "Spotlight Follow Up" — Print on cardstock and cut apart. Tape to the backs of randomly selected chairs throughout the conferee seating area.
- Item 2: "Daily Overview" — Print on cardstock and place one in each *VBS 2026 Backpack*.
- (5) Pens — Place one pen in each *VBS 2026 Backpack*.
- Pencils (1 per conferee)
- Poster putty
- (5) Fine tip permanent markers
- Mavalus® tape or other paint and surface-safe tape
- Strips of brightly colored paper, approximately 1-inch wide (1 per conferee)
- CD player, laptop or cell phone and Bluetooth® speaker to play Music for Preschoolers CD
- TV/DVD Player to play the "Light of the World" Video

Room Setup

Arrange chairs in a semicircle. Cover the focal wall with a *VBS 2026 Supersized Backdrop*. Cover two tables with a *VBS 2026 Tablecloth* and display the curriculum alongside Illumination Station décor items and other tabletop decorations. Drape *VBS 2026 String Flags* across the doorway.

Teaching Steps

1. Welcome and Theme Overview (5 minutes)

- Play songs from the Music for Preschoolers CD as conferees arrive.
- Greet conferees as they arrive, welcoming them to "Spotlight Bible Study."
- Distribute a brightly colored strip of paper to each attendee. (You may also place these in seats prior to the session.)

- Instruct each conferee to write her name, email address, and VBS dates on her strip of paper and attach it to the Supersized Backdrop as if it is a light beam from one of the spotlights.
- Introduce the group to this year's VBS. Explain that John 8:12 says, "Jesus spoke to them again: 'I am the light of the world. Anyone who follows me will never walk in the darkness but will have the light of life.'" Say: "Illumination Station challenges our kids to wrestle with Jesus' important question to His disciples, 'Who do you say that I am?' Throughout VBS, our kids will be challenged to explore all the ways that light illuminates, moves, brightens, and even reveals while discovering that Jesus is the Light of the world!"

2. Shining the Spotlight on Preschool Resources—Preschool Starter Kids and Multi-age Preschool Resources (10 minutes)

- Explain that the difference between the two Starter Kits is related to how churches want to group kids at VBS. If each preschool age group will be in its own room at VBS, then churches will want to use the Preschool Starter Kit. If churches will have all preschool ages together in one classroom, they will want to use the Multi-age Starter Kit.
- Overview the resources included in the *VBS 2026 Preschool Starter Kit*.
 - Babies–2s:
 - One Babies–2s Leader Guide
 - One Babies–2s Leader Pack with Music for Babies CD
 - One Keepsake Book
 - 3s–Pre-K:
 - One 3s–Pre-K Leader Guide
 - One 3s–Pre-K Leader Pack with Music for Preschoolers CD
 - One Preschool Activity Book
 - Kindergarten:
 - One Kindergarten Leader Guide
 - One Kindergarten Leader Pack with Music for Preschoolers CD
 - One Preschool Activity Book
 - Rotations:
 - 3s–Kindergarten Rotation Pack
 - 3s–Kindergarten Missions Rotation Leader Guide with DVD
 - 3s–Kindergarten Music Rotation with Leader Guide and DVD
 - 3s–Kindergarten Crafts Rotation Leader Guide
 - 3s–Kindergarten Recreation Rotation Leader Cards
 - Music for Preschoolers CD
 - Craft Pack Samples
 - Accessories & Gifts:
 - LED Flashing Ball
 - Memory Maker Sample
- Remind conferees that each teacher in a class will need her own leader guide, but only one leader pack is needed per classroom.
- Explain that there is an option of buying a Starter Kit with digital add-on, which allows for one additional copy of each leader guide to be printed (only \$31 more).
- Hold up the Babies–2s Leader Guide as you walk through it briefly.
 - Leader Tips:
 - Sample Schedule
 - Audio Resources
 - Printable Resources

- Safety and Security Tips
 - Hygiene and Snack Tips
- Bible Content:
 - Overview of Bible Stories
 - Say: “The Babies–2s focus is different because it is based on foundational Bible stories. It is the same theme and same level of biblical learning (LOBL), but it is different Bible stories.” Call attention to the Day 5 story, which is the same Bible story as the Preschool and Kids Day 3 Bible story.
 - Day 1: Mary and Joseph Heard Good News
 - Day 2: Jesus Was Born
 - Day 3: Jesus Grew Up
 - Day 4: Jesus Taught People
 - Day 5: Jesus Helped People
 - Two sections of teaching plans, tailored to the following age groups:
 - Babies–Younger 1s
 - Older 1s and 2s (Often young 3s are included in these classrooms since VBS is in the summer and promotion Sunday does not typically happen until late summer or early fall.)
 - Bible Verse: “Jesus is God’s Son.” *Mark 1:11* (paraphrase)
 - Bible Story Plus—Explain that Bible Story Plus is a short “group time” type experience for older 2s and younger 3s. It includes:
 - Telling the Bible Story
 - Singing or Moving to Music
 - Playing a Game
 - Joining in a Group Activity with Friends
- Theme Activities and Recreation
- Music and Movement
- Continuing the Connection at Home and with Parents
- Say: “You are more than a babysitter! The activities in the leader guide are specifically designed to help infants through younger 3s learn about God.”
- Encourage conferees to choose a few activities from the leader guide to do each day.
- Show and discuss the leader pack. Explain how the leader pack and leader guide work together for the convenience of the teacher.
- Show the Keepsake Book. Mention that this is a great keepsake for parents to mark their child’s first VBS and/or earliest memories and experiences at church.
- Hold up each of the other leader guides as you walk through the 3s–Pre-K, Kindergarten, and Multi-age Preschool Leader Guides. Briefly overview the benefits of each section:
 - Make Your VBS Glow
 - Shine the Light on Jesus (VBS Overview)
 - Schedule and Rotation Options
 - Make VBS Great for All Kids
 - Age Group Characteristics
 - Leader Tips
 - Days 1–5 Teaching Plans
 - Supplies
 - Activity-based Decorations
 - Music and Motions

3. Shining the Spotlight on the Bible Verse (15 minutes)

- Direct everyone's attention to the "Bible Verse Poster" (Kindergarten Pack Item 8) and say the verse together.
- Form teams of 6–8 players. Using the "Bible Verse Fish" (Kindergarten Pack Item 37), instruct the teams to mix up the fish well and create a memory game board with their fish, word-side down. Each team can gather around its "game board" so that everyone can see it at the same time.
- Explain that each fish has a coordinating fish with a matching face and tail.
- On "Go," one person from each team will attempt to make a match. If the player makes a match, he can gather the fish from the game board. If a match is not made, the fish are flipped back over.
- Lead conferees to play the matching game, with each team member taking a turn to find a match. Say: "Once all matches are found, put the fish in order of the verse. The first team to get the fish matched and in order, wins!"
- Lead the winning team to read the complete Bible verse aloud. Explain that this is a preschool-friendly paraphrase of the verse that is appropriate for a preschooler's developmental level of understanding.
- Teach the group the song motions to the Bible verse song, "Light of the World."
- Play the video of "Light of the World" from the DVD (found in the 3s–K Rotation Pack). Invite the group to sing along and do the motions.

4. Shining the Spotlight on the Bible Content (30 minutes)

- Distribute a "Scavenger Hunt Checklist" (Kindergarten Pack Item 26) and a pencil to each conferee.
- Explain that hidden around the room are cards depicting items that help us see. Instruct conferees to search around the room for the "Scavenger Hunt Cards" (Kindergarten Pack Item 10) hidden before the session.
- Explain that as they find the cards, they should check off each one on their lists. Direct conferees to circle the box of the light source they find first.
- Encourage conferees to work together if you notice anyone struggling to find the cards. Group them into five groups based on who found what item first. Adjust teams as needed for balance.
- Hand each group one of the prepared backpacks. Explain that inside is a leader guide from either 3s–Pre-K, Kindergarten, or Multi-age along with a "Daily Overview" (Item 2) sheet. They will need to find the correct day's session in their leader guide that matches what is printed at the top of their sheet and then work together as a group to complete the sheet for their session.
- Set a timer for approximately 10 minutes to finish the assignment. Then ask each group to give a summary of its work.

5. Shining the Spotlight on Preschool Rotations (15 minutes)

- Show conferees the 3s–Kindergarten Rotation Pack. Explain that there are rotation ideas designed specifically for children ages 3 through completed kindergarten. Offering age-appropriate activities will make rotations more successful and enjoyable for both teachers and children!
- Explain that the Rotation Pack includes teaching plans for:
 - Mirror Ball Music
 - Kaleidoscope Crafts
 - Suncatcher Recreation
 - Glow-in-the-dark Missions

- Explain that the Neon Snack Rotation Recipe Cards can be purchased separately (or come inside the *Kids Starter Kit*). Snacks that are appropriate for preschoolers are marked with a purple light burst on the top right of the recipe card that reads “preschool friendly.”
- Show the rotation leader guides. Explain that rotations will be covered in greater detail in the Preschool Rotation breakout.
 - Mirror Ball Music:
 - Show the 3s–K Music Rotation Leader Guide.
 - Explain that the leader guide includes a DVD with instructional and demonstration videos for each of the preschool songs.
 - Call attention to the unique code on page 2 of the leader guide that allows access to the videos and printable files online. This is helpful if you do not have access to a DVD player. (Stress to conferees that these videos are for individual church use only and may not be publicly posted online without violating federal copyright law.)
 - Kaleidoscope Crafts
 - Show the 3s–Kindergarten Crafts Rotation Leader Guide.
 - Explain that the crafts are designed for ages 3s–completed kindergarten, but some crafts may be more appropriate for one age than another.
 - Mention that there is always at least one activity that relates specifically to the Bible story each day. All activities provide the leader with a “connect” paragraph to help tie it to the Bible truth.
 - Say: “No matter which craft you choose, be sure to share the Bible story summary and ‘connect’ thoughts to reinforce the Bible truths being taught.”
 - Draw attention to the sample crafts on display. Encourage conferees to look at the crafts before they leave.
 - Suncatcher Recreation
 - Show the 3s–Kindergarten Recreation Rotation Leader Cards.
 - Explain that the Rec Cards include one Bible Story Game for each day. These cards also include a Story Connection.
 - State that the Bible Story Game is designed to help preschoolers connect and understand the Bible Story and Point for that day.
 - Show the Administrative Cards at the front of the pack and explain that these cards include teaching tips, kid characteristics, leader responsibilities, and decorating ideas.
 - Glow-in-the-dark Missions:
 - Show the 3s–Kindergarten Missions Rotation Leader Guide.
 - Say: “The missions guide includes a DVD with a short video segment for each day. If you prefer, you can download all DVD items by going to my.lifeway.com/redeem and entering the unique code provided in your missions leader guide. A written synopsis of the video is also in the back of the leader guide if prefer to tell the story.
 - Explain that Days 1–3 highlight the Steelman family who serve as IMB missionaries in Kenya. Days 4–5 showcase NAMB missionary Tyler Martin, who serves in Bar Nunn, Wyoming.
 - Share that the VBS mission project encourages churches to support their local foster care system by contacting a local faith-based organization or child welfare agency to discover what specific items would best help them as they serve kids in foster care. These items could include things

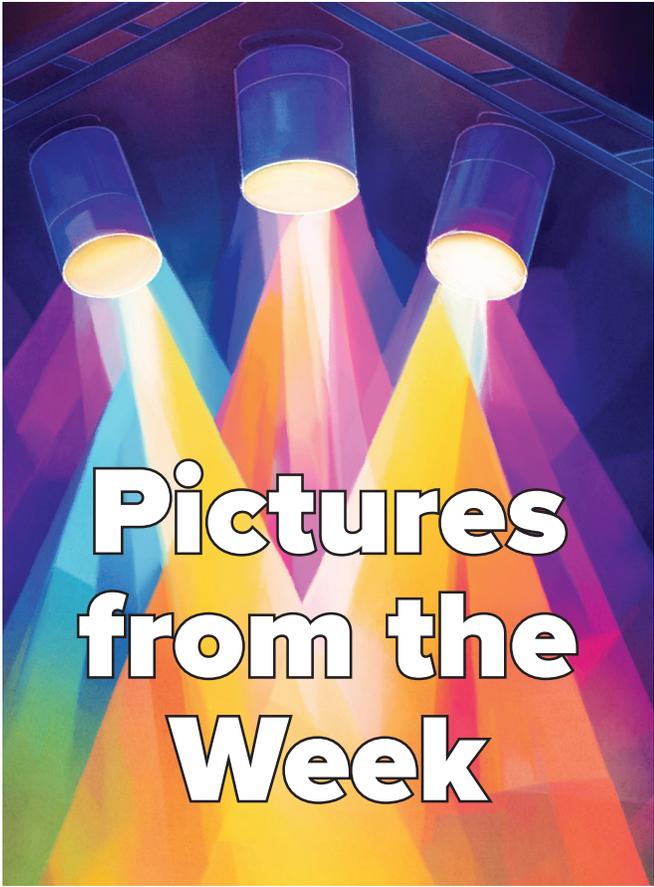
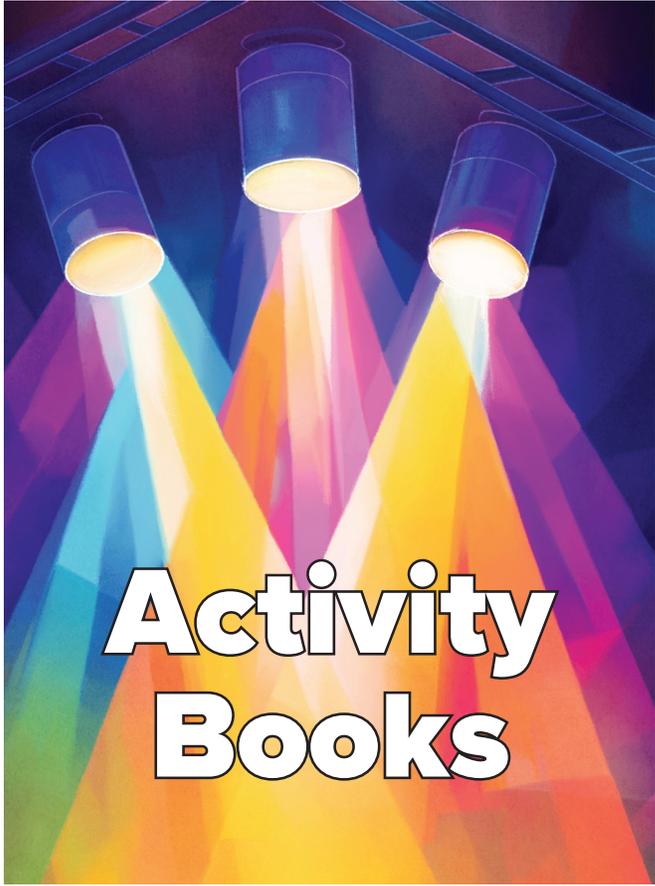
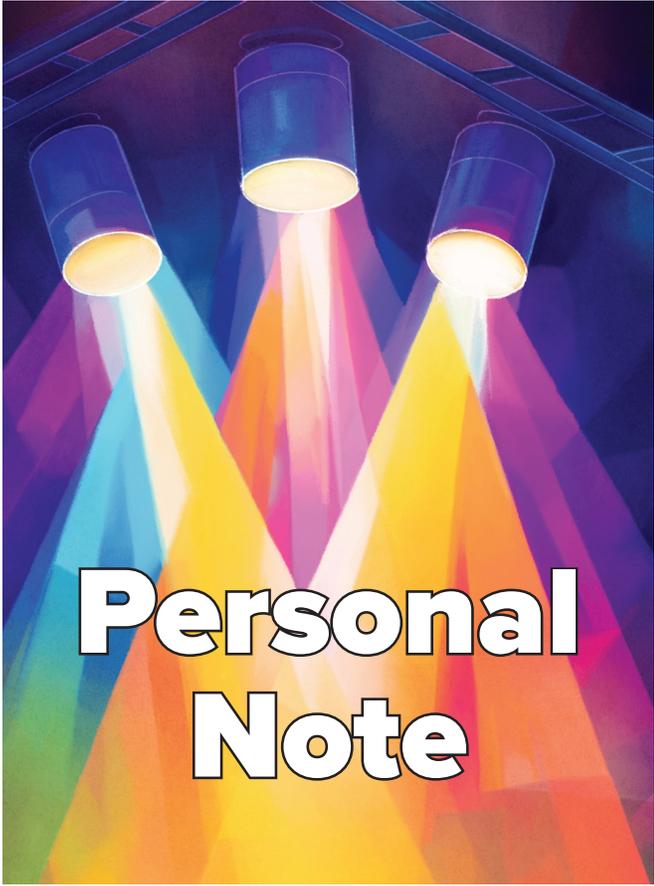
like new toys, books, socks, underwear, stuffed animals, toiletries, or small duffel bags.

6. Shining the Spotlight on Continuing the Connection (10 minutes)

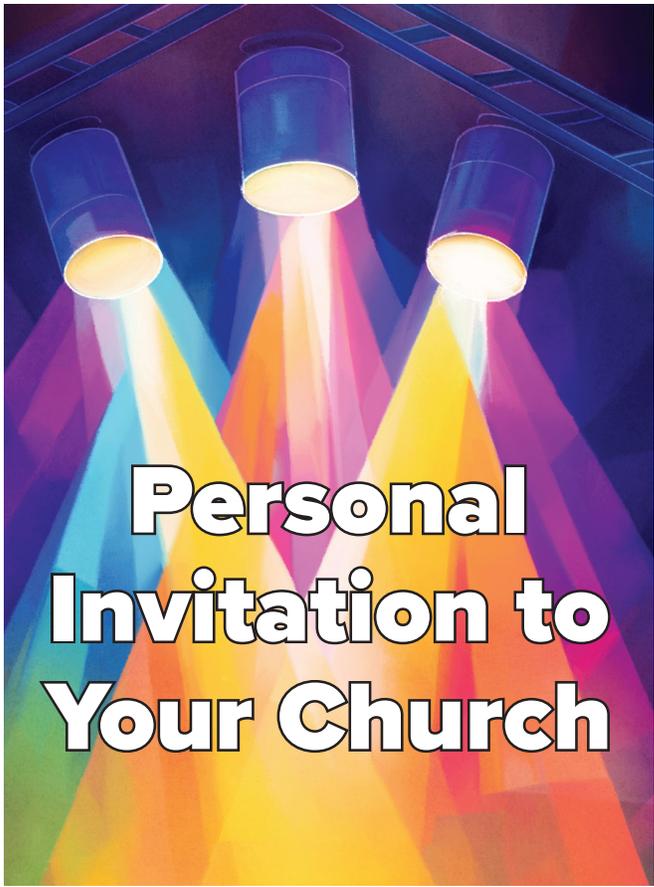
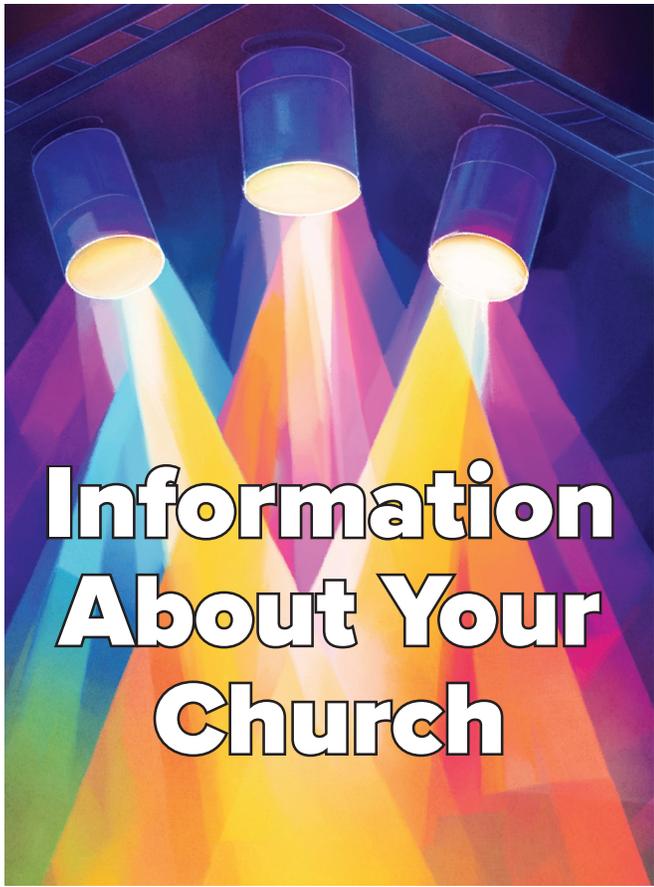
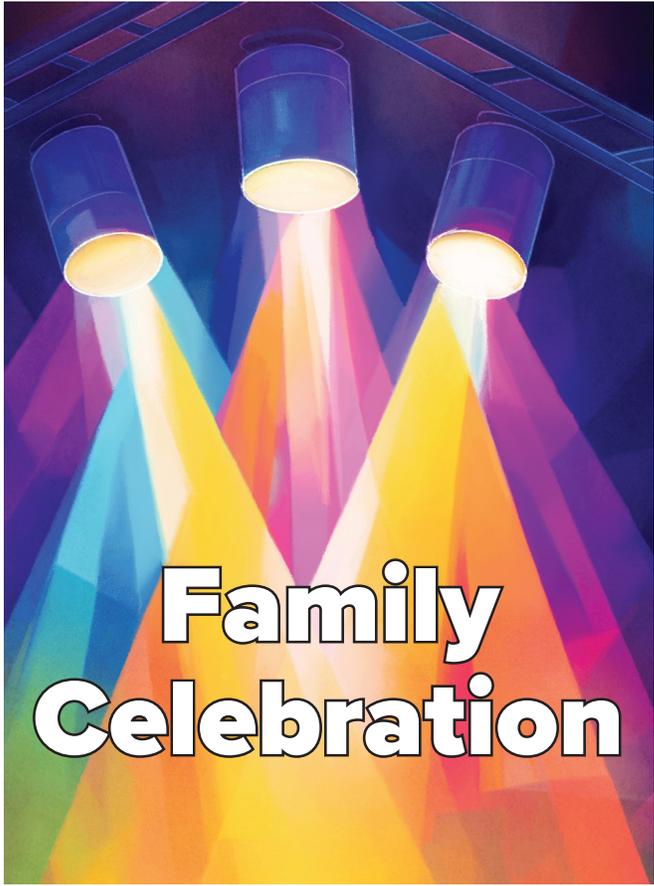
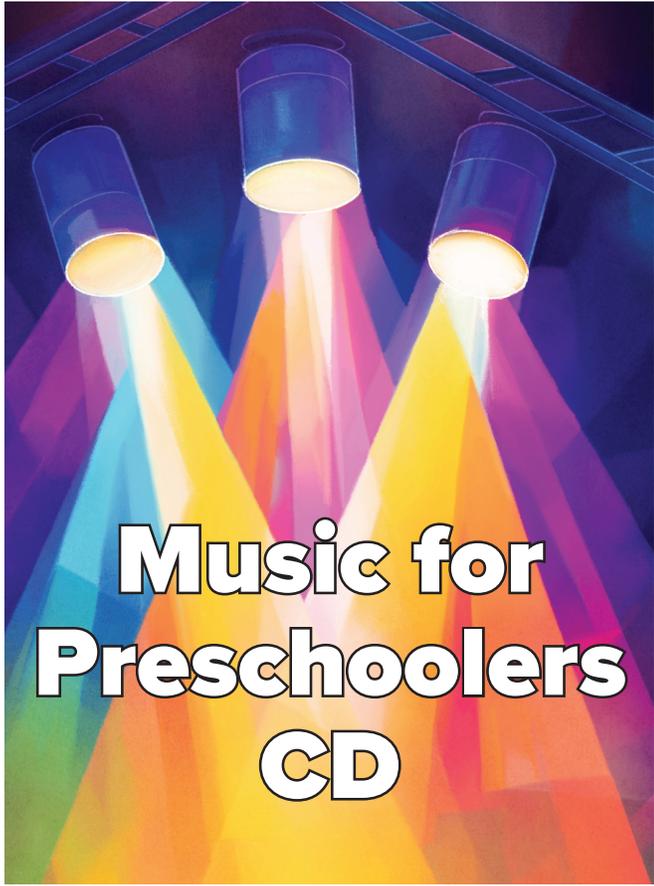
- Explain that a strategic, intentional follow-up plan is an important part of VBS. Say: “As you plan and prepare for every aspect of VBS, be sure to add follow-up to your planning BEFORE VBS. If you wait until VBS is over to plan how you will follow up with these families, you will likely not follow up.”
- Guide conferees to look on the backs of their chairs and see if a spotlight is attached. If so, ask conferees to read the idea that is being spotlighted.
- Explain that each of these ideas can be used intentionally to connect with unchurched families who attended VBS.
- Discuss how each can be used for follow up after VBS:
 - Personal note
 - Activity Books
 - Pictures from the week
 - Home visits
 - Music for Preschoolers CD
 - Family Celebration
 - Information about your church
 - Personal invitation to your church
- If time allows, invite one or two conferees to share ideas from their own experience.

7. Closing (5 minutes)

- Allow time at the end to answer any questions or clarify content.
- Offer these final words of encouragement:
 - Be flexible—Adjust your plans to make VBS the best experience possible for you and your preschoolers.
 - Help kids learn the truth about who Jesus is through each activity you do.
 - Build relationships with kids.
 - Remember the process is more important than the finished product.
 - Enjoy the adventure!
- Invite conferees to take a light beam from the spotlight on the wall (not their own).
- Encourage each conferee to pray for the person whose name is on that beam. If an email address is included on the leaf, suggest sending a note of encouragement to the person and letting her know she has been prayed for.
- Close in prayer. Pray for the conferees and for the VBS of churches represented in the room, across the country, and around the world.



Item 1. "Spotlight Follow Up"



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Day 1: Jesus Is God's Promised Son

Read the highlighted sections of the Day 1 in your Leader Guide and answer the questions below.

What is Day 1's Bible Story? *Be prepared to share a synopsis of the story.*

What is the "Spotlight Question" for Day 1?

What is the "Today's Point" for Day 1?

What was your learning activity?

What was the point of the learning activity?

How did the learning activity reinforce the Bible Story?



Day 2: Jesus Is God's Perfect Son

Read the highlighted sections of the Day 2 in your Leader Guide and answer the questions below.

What is Day 2's Bible Story? *Be prepared to share a synopsis of the story.*

What is the "Spotlight Question" for Day 2?

What is the "Today's Point" for Day 3?

What was your learning activity?

What was the point of the learning activity?

How did that learning activity reinforce the Bible Story?



Day 3: Jesus Is God's Powerful Son of God

Read the highlighted sections of the Day 3 in your Leader Guide and answer the questions below.

What is Day 3's Bible Story? *Be prepared to share a synopsis of the story.*

What is the "Spotlight Question" for Day 3?

What is the "Today's Point" for Day 3?

What was your learning activity?

What was the point of the learning activity?

How did the learning activity reinforce the Bible Story?



Day 4: Jesus Is The Proven Son of God

Read the highlighted sections of the Day 4 in your Leader Guide and answer the questions below.

What is Day 4's Bible Story? *Be prepared to share a synopsis of the story.*

What is the "Spotlight Question" for Day 4?

What is the "Today's Point" for Day 4?

What was your learning activity?

What was the point of the learning activity?

How did the learning activity reinforce the Bible Story?



Day 5: Jesus Is God's Plan For Forgiveness

Read the highlighted sections of the Day 5 in your Leader Guide and answer the questions below.

What is Day 5's Bible Story? *Be prepared to share a synopsis of the story.*

What is the "Spotlight Question" for Day 5?

What is the "Today's Point" for Day 5?

What was your learning activity?

What was the point of the learning activity?

How did the learning activity reinforce the Bible Story?