



START *the* PARTY

Celebrate the Good News

MISSIONS

Let's throw a party! The Start the Party missions curriculum is designed to help you support your local community. We want to help you find ways to throw parties for others in your area. We know there are so many needs in the world today. What better way to use your "Start the Party" week than by teaching kids how to celebrate, give, and serve others in need in your area.

We first suggest gathering a list of organizations you'd like to support. Your church may already have connections with outside organizations that could make an easy partnership. Some examples are:

- food pantry
- homeless shelter
- local schools
- women's shelters
- foster care agencies

Reach out to each of these organizations and ask them the following questions. We also suggest inviting representatives from the various organizations to speak with the children if possible and to receive the donations kids bring and the items they make this week.

- What are your biggest needs right now?
- Can kids help meet any of those needs?
- Do you have any resources we can use to share at our VBS, such as pictures or video overviewing what you do?
- Do you ever speak to church groups?
- Is your content kid friendly? (If not, ask the organization to speak to your mission's leadership team to help them prepare.)

We will provide you with some daily examples of how you can be a party starter for your community. Please feel free to edit to meet your specific needs. We know not every child or community has resources to give to others. The goal of this material is to help kids give in easy ways. However, if children are not able to donate, they can always make cards to share encouragement with anyone and of course pray for the needs of others.

Should your church choose to collect an offering to donate to an organization, we suggest using Day 1 to make a coin collection container instead of the door hangers. This can be done by decorating a milk carton or oatmeal container or by ordering craft kits online.

It may be helpful to tell parents and caregivers about the mission projects for the week ahead of time. You can include this in your registration, daily newsletter, or a sign you display at VBS.

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TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Matthew's Party
Luke 5:27-32

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

**Jesus is a good reason
to have a party.**

KEY QUESTION

**What is your favorite
type of party?**

MEMORY VERSE

**"You always show me the path
that leads to life. You will fill me
with joy when I am with you."**
Acts 2:28, NIV

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

START THE PARTY DOOR HANGERS

WHAT YOU NEED: Markers, crayons, fun stickers, glitter pens, glue, tape, blank door hangers (can be found on sites like Amazon, SSWW, or Oriental Trading®); from the OrangeVBS.com store: Vinyl Stickers, Memory Verse Clings, or Temporary Tattoos can be added to this project.

WHAT YOU DO:

- Set out supplies in the center of tables.
- Give each child a door hanger.
- Allow kids to decorate their door hangers, making sure they include any important information about your VBS.
- Add the vinyl stickers from the Orange VBS shop or staple a pack of the Orange VBS temporary tattoos or the memory verse cling to the door hanger as a fun extra.
- For younger children, you may want to print your VBS dates and times on paper they can glue on the door hanger to ensure accuracy.

WHAT YOU SAY:

"Today, we're kicking off a week of celebrating and serving our community! We'll be focusing on helping some local organizations this week who need our help. *(List the organizations you'll be serving.)* These groups do amazing work in our city, and we're going to learn how we can support them. We will learn about one each day and simple ways we can help them.

"The first organization we'll help is our local food pantry. Did you know that our local food pantry helps to feed . . . *(share all the facts you've gathered from your local organization).* We will help by . . . *(explain how you will help).* If everyone brings just one item, think how that can add up! It can be something simple like a can of chili or soup. When you get home today, ask if there is one thing in your kitchen you could possibly bring back tomorrow.

"Speaking of bringing something or someone back tomorrow, we know a party is always more fun with friends, so not only do we want you to bring back a canned good tomorrow, but we also want you to invite a friend or neighbor to come with you, too. That's why we made these Start the Party door hangers—to help you invite a friend who is not here today so they can party with us the rest of the week. Because remember, **Jesus is a good reason to have a party.**

"Will you pray with me? God, thank You for bringing all of us here this week. Help us to learn more about You. Show us little ways we can be a party starter for others around us. In Jesus' name, amen."

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Yesterday you kicked off the week by challenging the kids to bring one canned good to donate. We suggest inviting a representative from your local food pantry to speak with the kids today and explain what they do to serve those in need in your city. If they do not have a representative, ask them if they can provide you with some pictures, facts about their organization, and ways you can pray for them.

Today kids will create birthday party kits to donate to a local foster care agency. Share any kid-appropriate information about the organization with the children. If you have not already done so, invite a representative from the agency to speak with the children tomorrow and receive their gifts.

Because time will be limited, we recommend using this schedule:

- 10 minutes Overview and pray for the organization(s) you are helping today.
- 10-15 minutes Follow the instructions for today's activity on the following page.
- 5 minutes Wrap up with a quick overview of the organization you will help tomorrow.

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TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Jesus' Parable of the
Wedding Feast
Matthew 22:1-14

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Everyone is invited to the party.

KEY QUESTION

How does it feel to be invited?

MEMORY VERSE

**"You always show me the path
that leads to life. You will fill me
with joy when I am with you."**

Acts 2:28, NIV

BASIC TRUTH

**I should treat others the way
I want to be treated.**

A PARTY FOR EVERYONE

WHAT YOU NEED:

Part 1: Colored paper, markers, scissors, magazines, glitter, birthday party themed stickers, confetti, glue, tape

Part 2: Large gift box and birthday wrapping paper or party themed pre-printed box, party hats, blowers, streamers, paper birthday plates and napkins, balloons

WHAT YOU DO:

Part 1:

- Place all Part 1 supplies in the center of the table.
- Guide kids to make one or two generic birthday cards using the supplies.
- Help kids write thoughtful messages in their cards. You may want to place examples on the craft tables or on screens in the room.
- Tell kids to sign the cards with their first name only.
- Collect the cards.

Part 2:

- Create an assembly line and allow kids to pack the birthday party items into boxes.
 - Allow your local foster care agency to help determine how many of each item should be included in each party kit.
- Add the pre-made birthday cards to the kits.
- Wrap the boxes if needed.

WHAT YOU SAY:

"Today we made birthday cards and a party in a box for kids in foster care. We will talk more about our local foster care agency tomorrow and give them these birthday kits to ensure every child has a birthday party!"

"Remember, in our story in Large Group today we talked about how Jesus has invited ALL of us to share in the party. We can put our faith in Jesus and live the life God made us to live. We can have a relationship with God that makes our lives better NOW, and we know the party will last forever!"

"By sharing these cards and a party kit, it allows us to make sure every child feels loved and celebrated. Before we wrap up today, we're going to pray for the kids who will receive our boxes. Let's ask God to help them feel special not only on their birthday, but every day, and ask Him to show us how we can make others around us feel like they are loved with the love of Jesus." *(Pray for the children who will receive the boxes.)*

(Before you dismiss, ask kids to consider bringing an item to donate to your local foster care organization. Ask the organization for suggestions. Most foster kids have an immediate need for toiletries, school supplies, and clothing. Some agencies may also ask for comfort items like a new stuffed animal or a soft blanket.)

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Yesterday you asked the kids to collect items for foster kids. We suggest inviting a representative from your local foster care agency to speak with the kids today and share information about their organization that's appropriate to share with children. You can allow kids to present the party boxes they made yesterday and any additional items they brought today.

Today you will focus on a local organization that provides for your neighbors who may currently be experiencing homelessness. We recommend a place that provides hot showers, food, or shelter. Kids will make toiletry kits as their activity for the day. Share any kid-appropriate information about the organization with the children.

Because time will be limited, we recommend using this schedule:

- 10 minutes Overview and pray for the organization(s) you are helping today.
- 10-15 minutes Follow the instructions for today's activity on the following page.
- 5 minutes Wrap up with a quick overview of the organization you will help tomorrow.

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TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

**Jesus' Parable of the
Lost Son**
Luke 15:11-32

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Celebrate the good news.

KEY QUESTION

What's the best news
you've ever heard?

MEMORY VERSE

**"You always show me the path
that leads to life. You will fill me
with joy when I am with you."**
Acts 2:28, NIV

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

POWER PACKS

WHAT YOU NEED: Provide enough of each of the following so each child can pack one kit: travel-size shampoo, travel-size soap, travel-size toothbrush, travel-size comb, disposable washcloth, and lunch-size paper bags; also provide markers, crayons, stickers, and other items to decorate the bags

Note: Travel-size toiletry items can be purchased in bulk online, and/or you can ask local hotels for donations.

WHAT YOU DO:

Part 1:

- Place bags and crafting items in the center of the craft tables.
- Instruct each child to take one bag.
- Tell kids to decorate the bags and write "Jesus Loves You" on them.

Part 2:

- Create an assembly line and allow kids to fill their decorated bags with the toiletry supplies.

WHAT YOU SAY:

"Today we're going to make power packs. These packages are going to be filled with little things that can help those who may not have a home where they can get cleaned up. Sometimes people experiencing homelessness might simply need a hot shower and a place to brush their teeth. Those are things we may not think about if we have never been without.

"Remember, today we're talking about how much Jesus loves us. He loves us so much that He sent His son Jesus to die on the cross for us. Jesus also loves all the people who will receive these power packs filled with things they need. He loves them so much that He died for them too. I'm glad we can do something kind to show Jesus' love for others today. Let's take time before we leave to pray for those who may receive these bags." *(Pray for the recipients of the bags. Ask if any of the kids would like to pray specifically for those who will receive one of the power packs they made.)*

(Before you dismiss, ask kids to think about other items they could bring to donate to the organization you are partnering with. Ask your local partner what their needs are at the moment. Organizations like Shower Up or local shelters often need socks, towels, or flip-flops for those needing and using their services. There are typically many ways kids can get involved to collect small items that can help.)

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Yesterday the kids created power packs for people experiencing homelessness, and they may also be bringing donations today. We suggest inviting a representative from your local homeless shelter to speak with the kids today and share information about their organization that's appropriate to share with children. You can allow kids to present their gifts to the representative.

Today you will partner with your local schools. The goal is to find how to meet practical needs of kids who may not have basic supplies for schools. For our purposes, we are going to help you create a backpack drive by collecting school supplies and backpacks. However, your school system may have other needs. Please ask them how you can best help.

We know this could be an expensive activity. Our team is happy to help you think of simple ways kids can help schools and keep your cost down. Some ideas include:

- Ask adult small groups in your church to partner with you on this project. They can purchase backpacks and supplies ahead of time and allow the kids to fill them during VBS.
- Ask kids to collect supplies all summer and set a date right before school starts to wrap up this project.

Be sure you communicate a clear plan for when the backpack drive will end, exactly what is needed, and how and where kids can turn in supplies. You can use the "Start The Party" letterhead found in your "Read Me First" folder to communicate clearly with parents.

Because time will be limited, we recommend using this schedule:

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|---------------|---|
| 10 minutes | Overview and pray for the organization(s) you are helping today. |
| 10-15 minutes | Follow the instructions for today's activity on the following page. |
| 5 minutes | Wrap up with a quick overview of the organization you will help tomorrow. |

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TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

The Woman at the Well

John 4:1-26, 39-42

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Jesus is the life of the party.

KEY QUESTION

How can Jesus change your life?

MEMORY VERSE

"You always show me the path that leads to life. You will fill me with joy when I am with you."

Acts 2:28, NIRV

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

BACK TO SCHOOL ALREADY?

WHAT YOU NEED: 11x17 paper to make small posters, letter-size colored paper to make flyers, markers, pens, pencils, glitter, stickers, glue dots or glue, confetti

WHAT YOU DO:

- Explain that kids will be hosting a backpack drive to support students in need in their local school systems.
- Provide information about the types of items needed, such as backpacks, notebooks, pencils, pens, and other school supplies.
- Encourage kids to bring in items from home or to ask family and friends to donate.
- Guide kids to create posters and flyers to promote the backpack drive within the church and possibly around your community. These posters can be taped on, above, and around collection sites.
- If time allows, let kids make some letter-size flyers with a list of items they need to collect. This will give them something to take home so they can remember what they are collecting.

WHAT YOU SAY:

"My favorite thing about our Bible story today is how Jesus knew the needs of the woman at the well and He met her with great love and compassion. He cared about the practical needs she had but also told her about her need for eternal life. He offered her a life that is better than any other kind of life. Isn't that the best? We want to help people this week so we can not only help meet their practical needs, but also pray that God uses that to give us opportunities to share about the joy-filled life only Jesus can give.

"Today we're going to help kids your age. We are going to make posters so we can host a backpack drive to collect school supplies for kids in your school system. When we finish today, let's thank God for the opportunity to meet the needs of others and ask Him to be with the kids who receive the backpacks and supplies and that they will learn about Jesus and the joy He gives." (*Pray for the kids who will receive the backpacks and school supplies.*)

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Today we're giving you several options of ways you can wrap up your missions emphasis for VBS week. You may need this time to wrap up all the other missions projects kids have worked on this week. Some churches may need this time to give you extra time to prepare for your Family Experience. Others may have a church-specific missions emphasis you'd like to focus on. We want to give you several ideas while also empowering you to use this time as needed for your particular church and community.

Because time will be limited, we recommend using this schedule:

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| 10 minutes | Overview and pray for the organization(s) you have helped this week. |
| 10-15 minutes | Emphasize a mission project for your church as you complete the activity. |
| 5 minutes | Wrap up by praying for the kids as they wrap up the week together. |

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TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

You Are the Light of the World
Matthew 5:14-16

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

You can be a party starter.

KEY QUESTION

How can YOU start the party?

MEMORY VERSE

**"You always show me the path
that leads to life. You will fill me
with joy when I am with you."**
Acts 2:28, NIRV

BASIC TRUTH

**I should treat others the way
I want to be treated.**

KIDS ON MISSION!

WHAT YOU NEED: Today's supply list depends on you! Below you will find a list of optional things you can do to shine your light for Jesus today. We encourage you to invite those that have a passion for local or international missions in your church to get involved today.

WHAT YOU DO:

- **Handmade Cards:** Encourage kids to create handmade cards with uplifting messages for seniors in nursing homes, patients in hospitals, or troops overseas.
- **Care Packages:** Help kids assemble care packages with essential items like toiletries, socks, snacks, and handwritten notes to distribute to families in need.
- **Blessing Bags:** Have kids put together "blessing bags" containing non-perishable snacks, water bottles, and hygiene products to keep in their family vehicle to distribute to people they encounter who are experiencing homelessness.
- **Blanket Tying:** Organize a blanket-tying event where kids can help tie knots on fleece blankets to donate to homeless shelters or families in need during the colder months.
- **Book Drive:** Host a book drive where kids can collect gently used books to donate to local schools, libraries, or shelters to promote literacy and provide entertainment. Kids can include bookmarks that have the memory verse for the week written on them.
- **Seed Bombs:** Teach kids how to make seed bombs using clay, soil, and wildflower seeds. They can distribute these seed bombs in public areas or community gardens to beautify the neighborhood. Help kids make a plant marker using permanent markers and water-resistant materials that can stake in the ground and say something like, "A gift from the Kids Ministry of XYZ Church."
- **Artwork Donations:** Ask kids to create artwork or crafts that can be donated to hospitals, senior centers, or shelters to brighten up the space and bring joy to others.
- **Thank You Notes:** Encourage kids to write thank you notes to essential workers, such as healthcare professionals, teachers, firefighters, and police officers, to show appreciation for their hard work and dedication. You can bundle them and take them with a gift basket on behalf of your church.
- **Community Clean-Up:** Plan a community clean-up day where kids can pick up litter, plant trees, or beautify public spaces to make their neighborhood cleaner and more enjoyable for everyone. Serve your city. What a great way to shine the light of Jesus!

WHAT YOU SAY:

"It has been a great week starting parties for so many all over our community! I hope we are known for the light of Jesus we get to shine to all the world. As we wrap up the week, let's pray for each group that we got to serve. Would anyone like to pray for a particular group we helped? *(If no one offers, take a moment to pray for everyone.)* Don't forget we can go shine the light of Jesus as we leave here today!"