# Isaac Is Born

**Genesis 21:1-6**

**Worship Theme:**
- God's promises bring us joy.

**Weaving Faith Into Life:**
- Children will remember to rejoice in the evidence of God's promises and love in their lives.

## Session Sequence

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<th>Session Sequence</th>
<th>What Children Will Do</th>
<th>Supplies</th>
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| **Let’s Praise God!**
(up to 25 minutes) | **Sing**
- “Got a Reason for Livin' Again” (track 2)
- “God Is Our Help” (Psalm 33:20) (track 18)
- “All His Promises” (Psalm 145:13b) (track 21)
- “Rejoice in the Lord Always” (Philippians 4:4) (track 17)
- “I Sing the Mighty Power of God” (track 16) | **KidsOwn Worship Kit:**
* Songs From FaithWeaver, KidsOwn Worship DVD: “Joyful People”

**Classroom Supplies:**
* Bible, CD player, TV, DVD player |

## Preschool

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Session Sequence</th>
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| **Let’s Learn the Point!**
(up to 25 minutes) | **Pass the Giggles**
Play a game in which they pass giggles and laughter around a circle. | **KidsOwn Worship Kit:**
* Songs From FaithWeaver: “Brotherly Love” (Romans 12:10) (track 20)

**Classroom Supplies:**
* CD player |
| **° Be Joyful**
Talk about joy, and then dance. | **KidsOwn Worship Kit:**
* Songs From FaithWeaver: “Brotherly Love” (Romans 12:10) (track 20)

**Classroom Supplies:**
* CD player |
| **Orange Smiles**
Learn to make orange smiles, and talk about joy. | **Classroom Supplies:**
* ¼ orange and 1 napkin per child, baby wipes |
### Session Sequence | What Children Will Do | Supplies
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#### Let’s Pray! (up to 10 minutes)
**The Offering**
Offer their gifts to God, and sing a song.
* KidsOwn Worship Kit: 
  * Songs From FaithWeaver: “Rejoice in the Lord Always” (Philippians 4:4) (track 17)
* Classroom Supplies: 
  * CD player, offering bowls

**Your Promises Bring Us Joy**
Discuss God’s promises that bring us joy.

**The Source of All Our Joy**
Move to a song as a closing prayer.
* KidsOwn Worship Kit: 
  * Songs From FaithWeaver, “Praise Him” (track 7)
* Classroom Supplies: 
  * CD player

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**Let’s Learn the Point! (up to 25 minutes)**

**Jokes for Joy**
Tell jokes and experience joy.
* Classroom Supplies: 
  * 1 photocopy of “Jokes for Joy” (p. 164) per 10 children, scissors

* Laugh With Me
Collect reasons to have joy and laugh.
* Classroom Supplies: 
  * Bible, 1 large sheet newsprint, tape, marker

* Rejoice!
Make buttons as conversation starters to help them remember to tell others about joy.
* Classroom Supplies: 
  * Bible; poster board; scissors; jokes from ‘Jokes for Joy’; tape; 1 pencil, marker, and paper clip per child

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* Starred activities can be used successfully with preschool and elementary children together.

Customize your session to fit your needs. You can separate preschoolers and elementary children for Let’s Learn the Point! Or, if you keep the children all together for the entire worship session, we suggest you choose from the starred activities.
God keeps his promises. In the first two verses of this passage, three times we read that God did what he said he would do. For Abraham and Sarah, it was the miraculous fulfillment of an amazing promise: the birth of a son to 90- and 100-year-old parents who had never before been able to have a child! And it was really their child—the son of both Abraham and Sarah—as confirmed in Genesis 21:2-3. The shame of childlessness that had haunted them for decades was finally erased. God brought a kind of joy to Abraham and Sarah that they had never known.

Isaac, the name Abraham gave his son, means “he laughs.” God had told Abraham to give the child that name a year or more earlier (Genesis 17:19). God apparently wanted Abraham and Sarah to remember that they had both laughed at different times in response to God’s announcement that they would have a son at their advanced ages (Genesis 17:17; 18:12). And perhaps God also wanted the name to remind them in the years to come of the joy God had brought them.

The circumcision of Isaac when he was eight days old wasn’t done just in obedience to God’s command. It was a sign of the covenant between God and Abraham, a sign that this child was one of God’s chosen people (Genesis 17:10-14).

Genesis 21:6 contains a play on words that’s pretty obvious even in English. Through the child named “he laughs,” God had brought laughter to Sarah and to all who knew her. In those days, any birth of a healthy child brought great joy, even more so if it was a boy. But a firstborn son, born to such elderly parents, was certainly a laughing matter! Sarah could hardly contain her happiness. Who could blame her?

Twenty-five years had passed since Abraham had left his home in Ur of the Chaldeans to follow God. Twenty-five years had passed since God first promised to make Abraham’s descendants into a great nation. Twenty-five years had passed since a childless couple of 65 and 75 years of age first believed God’s promise that they would have children. What a fantastic mountaintop in Abraham and Sarah’s faith journey! “He Laughs” was born!

**Devotion for Leaders**

Jesus’ mission was serious, but he knew how to have joy, too. He never doubted God’s gifts. As God’s Son, he would know best!

**Weaving Faith Into Your Life:** Recall some gifts God has given you. How did they bring joy? Perhaps they were answers to prayers or things you never even asked for. God loves to give gifts that will strengthen and encourage in many ways. Write down those gifts and a prayer of joy, and keep them where you’ll be reminded of the joy of God’s gifts.
**Why We Worship for Leaders**

There are so many reasons to take joy in the God we serve. God is loving. God is honorable. God is righteous and holy. God is dependable. God is tender and merciful. God is just. God is continually at work in our world. Today’s Scripture passage, the story of the birth of Isaac, focuses on the joy God’s promises bring us. God’s promises bring us joy because God always keeps his promises. It’s reassuring that God is true to his character and true to his word. Today celebrate God’s promises with the children in children’s church. Praise the God whose promises bring joy to his people.

**Easy Prep for Leaders**

**Let’s Praise God!**—Set up a TV and DVD player. Prepare the *KidsOwn Worship DVD* to play “Joyful People” (11). You’ll want to watch the clip at least once before the children arrive.

**Jokes for Joy**—Make one photocopy of the “Jokes for Joy” handout (p. 164) for every 10 children. Cut apart the handouts so each child will have one joke; it’s OK if more than one child has the same joke.

**Laugh With Me**—Tape a sheet of newsprint to a wall or lay it on the floor.

**Rejoice!**—Cut 2-inch circles from white poster board. Make sure you have one circle for each child.

**Preschool Activities**—Refer to the preschool pages for preparations.

**Web Help**—Get bonus leader tips and ideas at kidsownworship.com.

1. **Let’s Praise God!**

Play *Songs From FaithWeaver, Fall 2011* as children arrive. Designate some greeters to stand at the door and greet children as they arrive. Have your greeters ask each child, “Do you know where joy comes from?”

When everyone has arrived, welcome the group.

**Say** To begin our worship session, let’s watch a video clip.

Show the *KidsOwn Worship DVD* clip titled “Joyful People” (11).

**Ask**

- **What do you think made these people so happy?** (Friends; people who love them; family; God’s love.)

- **What does it mean to have joy?** (To be happy about something; to be happy about things God gives us.)

- **When do you have joy?** (When I know everything will be OK; when my family is all together and getting along.)

**Say** Today we’re talking about joy. As Christians who believe and serve God, we have more reason to be joyful than anyone else on earth. There are so many reasons for Christians to have joy. Let’s talk about them. Think of all the reasons Christians can be joyful. Think about the video to help you think of ideas. Raise your hand
when you’ve thought of an idea. When I call on you, call out your idea. It’ll be a way for us to praise God for giving us joy.

Take a couple of minutes to praise God for the reasons Christians have to be joyful.

**Say**

Isn’t it great to serve a God who gives us so much joy? God brings us joy in so many ways. One major reason we can have joy is because God wants to have a relationship with us. He sent Jesus to be our friend. Everyone who believes in Jesus and knows him as a good friend has a wonderful reason to be joyful! Today we’re going to talk about how God’s promises bring us joy. God’s promises bring us joy because he always keeps his promises. Let’s put on a joyful face and sing “Got a Reason for Livin’ Again.” Lyrics for all songs are at the back of this book.

Sing “Got a Reason for Livin’ Again.”

**Say**

Everybody makes promises. Most of us have occasionally broken a promise even though we try hard to keep our promises. But God faithfully keeps his promises to us. God will never ever break a promise he’s made. And he’s promised so many good things to us. He promises to be with us forever, to love us, to forgive our sins, to care for us, and to take us to live with him forever in heaven. God always keeps his promises. Let’s sing a praise song to tell God that we know we can depend on him all the time.

Sing “God Is Our Help” (Psalm 33:20).

**Say**

Sometimes we call God the King of kings and the Lord of lords. That means he’s better and more important than the most important person in the whole world. God proves that he’s better than us because he has the ability to keep his promises all the time. It’s part of God’s nature to keep his promises; it’s just part of who he is. Let’s glorify God, the King of kings and the Lord of lords, with this song. And let’s sing with joyful hearts because our God is good.

Sing “All His Promises” (Psalm 145:13b).

**Say**

As a king, God has the right to give us commands. There are several commandments in the Bible.

**Ask**

• What are some things God commands us to do? (Love him; love other people; put others first.)

**Say**

I’m going to read a command from God that you might not know about. Listen while I read Philippians 4:4.

Read the verse.

**Ask**

• What does God command us to do? (Have joy; rejoice in him.)

• Why do you think God commands us to rejoice? (He wants us to be happy; he wants others to see that loving God brings joy; it’s a way we can worship God.)
God wants us to be joyful. He wants us to delight in him and in the wonderful things he's done. Let's obey this command right now by singing “Rejoice in the Lord Always” (Philippians 4:4).

Sing “Rejoice in the Lord Always” (Philippians 4:4).

Another great way to be full of joy is to praise God. Praising God brings joy to our hearts. We can praise God for keeping the promises he's made to us. Let’s praise God with this song.

Sing “I Sing the Mighty Power of God.”

Lord God, you are mighty and powerful. You are capable of doing anything. We praise you and honor you because you keep your promises all the time, no matter what. God, our hearts swell up with joy because we serve and love a God who is so good to us. Thank you, God! In Jesus’ name, amen.

Let’s Learn the Point!

Preschool Activities, pages 159-160

At this time, have the preschool leader invite the preschoolers to go to their own room for this section of activities. Tear out the Preschool Activities page, and give it to the preschool leader. Have the preschool leader bring the preschoolers back to participate in Let’s Pray! with the older children. If you prefer to keep all the children together, do the starred (*) activities. They will work well with both elementary and preschool children.

Elementary Activities

Jokes for Joy

I've declared today a holiday! We're going to celebrate Isaac Day! Our Bible story is about Abraham and Sarah. They waited all their lives to have a child, and God had promised Abraham that he would have children. Finally God gave Sarah and Abraham a son—when Sarah was 90 years old and Abraham was 100 years old! Sarah realized that God not only had given her and Abraham a son, but also had filled their lives with laughter. So she named her son Isaac, which means “he laughs” in Hebrew.

Give one joke from the “Jokes for Joy” handout to each child.

Since today is Isaac Day, we're going to celebrate with laughter. I'd like you to find a partner—someone who doesn’t have the same joke as you. You’ll tell your joke to your partner; then your partner will tell his or her joke to you. Afterward, you’ll both find new partners and exchange jokes again. I’d like you to
continue until you’ve told your joke to five different people and have heard five different jokes.

After the children have had a chance to tell their jokes, gather everyone together. Ask a few volunteers to tell their favorites of the jokes they just heard. Tell the kids to keep their jokes to use in a later activity. Then discuss these questions:

**Ask**
- *Do you think God wants us to laugh? Why or why not?* (Yes, God has a great sense of humor; no, worshipping God is serious; yes, laughing brings us joy and makes us feel better.)
- *Why do you think God gives us joy?* (He wants us to rejoice in him; God wants us to be happy; God wants us to celebrate him and his promises.)

**Say**
Sarah and Abraham discovered that true joy comes from knowing that God keeps his promises. It’s God’s promises that make Isaac Day such a joyful holiday! Just as Sarah and Abraham celebrated the joy God gave them, we, too, can take time today to celebrate the joy God gives us. Let’s do that now.

* Laugh With Me

**Say**
Let’s hear about how God’s promises filled Sarah and Abraham with joy. Read aloud Genesis 21:1-6. Ask the kids to find partners. The birth of Isaac was a joyous surprise. Sarah and Abraham couldn’t believe that God had kept his promise. God filled Sarah and Abraham with laughter and joy. Just as he gave them joy, he gives all of us joy, too, each and every day. I’d like you to turn to your partner and talk about things in your life that God has given you that make you happy. See if you and your partner can come up with one thing that has given both of you joy. For example, maybe both of you have a best friend you can laugh with or a pet you like to spend time with. Maybe you both enjoy birthdays, or maybe you both like to sing. When you’ve decided on something God has given you that gives both of you joy, I’d like one of you to come up and write it on this sheet of newsprint. Indicate the sheet of newsprint you taped to the wall before class.

Give children a minute to discuss what brings them joy. If some pairs have trouble coming up with one thing that makes both partners happy, encourage them to choose something joyful that God gives everyone—food, the earth, or sunshine, for example. Make sure every pair writes something on the newsprint, and assist children who can’t write or who need help with spelling.

(continued on page 161)
Preschool Activities

Isaac Is Born

Genesis 21:1-6

Worship Theme:

God's promises bring us joy.

Easy Prep for Leaders

Be Joyful—Set up a CD player to play the CD track.

Orange Smiles—You'll need enough oranges for each child to have ¼ of an orange. Scrub the oranges well, slice them into fourths, and carefully remove all the seeds.

Using Theo

Consider using Theophilus the FaithRetriever puppet today in these ways:

• Have Theo lead the preschoolers from the main worship area to the preschool room.
• Have Theo dance in the “Be Joyful” activity.
• See the KidsOwn Worship Kit for a puppet skit written for today’s worship session.

Pass the Giggles

Gather the children in a circle.

Say
In the story for today, a little baby was born. His mom and dad were so happy God had given them a baby that they named him Isaac. The name Isaac means “laughter.” Isaac’s mom and dad were so happy about their new baby that they laughed and laughed with joy.

Laughing is lots of fun. Have you ever noticed when you start giggling that another person starts giggling? Why don’t we try it? Let’s laugh with joy just as Abraham and Sarah did when Isaac was born.

Turn to the child next to you and giggle. Then have that child turn to the next child and giggle. Have children pass the laughter all the way around the circle. Then pass hugs and smiles around the circle.

Abraham and Sarah were so happy. God promised them a baby. When their baby finally was born, they had so much joy that they named him Isaac, which means “laughter.” It’s good to laugh, and it’s good to feel joy. God’s promises bring joy to us.

* Be Joyful

Say
Let’s be joyful! Let’s talk about the things God has done that make us happy. In the Bible, there’s a story about a man who was so full of joy that he danced and danced. Everyone will have a chance to mention something good that God has done, and then we’ll all dance.

To make sure everyone has a chance to talk about how good God is, you’ll need to listen carefully while you dance. When the music stops, that’s your cue to stop dancing and sit down so we can hear something else about God. Ready? Here we go!

Give each child a chance to talk about something God has done that brings happiness and joy to people. After a child has shared an idea, turn on the CD to “Brotherly Love” (Romans 12:10) and have everyone dance for 30 seconds or so. Then stop the music, and give another child a chance to share an idea. Give everyone a chance to share. It’s OK if some of the ideas overlap.

End your praise time by dancing joyfully because God keeps his promises.

Say
Don’t we have a good God? God’s good deeds fill us with so much joy that it makes us want to dance. God’s promises bring us joy!
Preschool Activities

Orange Smiles

Give each child an orange piece and a napkin. Show the children how to bite into the orange so the skin goes lengthwise across their mouths to look like big orange smiles.

While the children eat their snacks, talk with them about the things that give them joy—the things that make them smile.

Ask
• When do you feel joy?
  • What do you do when you feel joyful?
  • What does God do to give us joy?
  • Why do you think God wants us to be joyful?

Listen to all of the children’s ideas, being sure to direct the conversation to God’s promises.

When the children have finished their oranges, help them clean up the mess by throwing their napkins away and washing their sticky faces and hands with baby wipes.

Say
Let’s show God our joy with our smiles and grins. I’m going to say some things. If it’s something that gives you joy, give God a great big grin. Ready? Here we go!

• sunshine
• swimming at the pool
• spaghetti
• answered prayer
• ladybugs
• playgrounds
• God’s love
• hugs
• making snow angels
• hot chocolate
• cookies
• playing games

God has given us many things that bring us joy. God gives us families who love us and hug us. God gives us food. God gives us strong bodies that can run and play. This week pay attention to the things that make you smile and be joyful. Remember to thank God for joyful things. Let’s thank God right now!

Pray
God, there are so many times during the day that we smile and laugh. God, we know that you give us joy. Thank you, God, for helping us to be joyful every day. In Jesus’ name, amen.

ALLERGY ALERT

Be aware that some children have allergies that can be dangerous. Know your children, and consult with parents about their children may have. Also be sure to read food labels carefully as hidden ingredients may cause allergy-related problems.

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You’ve put some really joyful things on this sheet, so let’s celebrate! Our Bible story says that when Sarah gave birth to Isaac, she said, “God has brought me laughter, and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me.” So we’re going to celebrate Isaac Day by laughing together. When I say aloud something joyful on this list, we’ll celebrate that joy by laughing aloud. When you see me raise my hands, you can laugh louder. You’ll keep laughing louder and louder—don’t stop! Then when you see me quickly give a “timeout” sign, I’d like you to stop laughing immediately. You must be quiet at once—not so much as a snicker! I won’t read the next item on the list until the whole room is completely quiet. I don’t know, though, laughter is contagious. I’m not sure if you can stop laughing! Let’s try it.

Read the first item on the list. Keep the children laughing continually by raising your palms upward. Then quickly make a “timeout” sign, and wait for complete silence before you move on to the item.

Celebrate every item on the newsprint with laughter.

I’ll bet that if we took the time to celebrate every promise God has made to us, we’d be laughing nonstop, all day! Sometimes we forget that the things that make us happy are the things God gives us. Isaac Day is all about remembering to celebrate God’s promises with joy. So now we’re going to make reminders that will help us celebrate Isaac Day with others.

* Rejoice!

Make sure the children still have their jokes from the first activity.

Give a pencil, a washable marker, a large paper clip, and a poster board circle to each child.

Have a child read aloud Philippians 4:4; then ask the rest of the children to say the verse aloud.

Philippians 4:4 is a good reminder to help us celebrate Isaac Day. I’d like you to take the slip of paper that has your joke on it, turn it over, and write the words from Philippians 4:4 on it.

Allow kids a minute to write the verse. Repeat the words if necessary, and help kids with spelling. Ask older kids to help younger kids write the verse.

Now we’re going to let everyone else know that today is Isaac Day by making buttons. On your poster-board circle, write, “Happy Isaac Day! Rejoice!” If you have room, you may want to add a smiley face or two. Then I’ll show you how to tape a paper clip on the back so you can attach your button to your collar. When kids have finished decorating their buttons, distribute small strips of tape. Show the children how to turn the button over, bend
the paper clip apart, and tape one side of the paper clip to the back of the button. Use the margin illustration on page 161 as a guide.

Have kids wear their buttons. Tell them that when someone asks them about Isaac Day, they can tell the story of Sarah, Abraham, and Isaac. Also, children can keep their jokes with them so they can celebrate Isaac Day by telling the joke to others and reciting the Bible verse written on the back.

3 \textbf{Let's Pray!}

\textbf{The Offering}

\textbf{Say} God’s promises really do bring us joy. God gives us good things every day. It’s natural for us to respond to God by giving him our gifts; it’s a way to show God we love him and appreciate the gifts and joy he gives to us. While we take the offering today, think of a gift you’d like to give God. Maybe you’d like to give God a gift of praise or a gift of obedience. Maybe you’d like to give God a gift of service.

Hold an offering bowl in your hand, and pretend to put your gift in the bowl.

\textbf{Say} When an offering bowl comes to you, you can pretend to put your gift to God in the offering bowl. Remember that when you put this gift in the offering bowl, it’s a promise to God that you’ll really give him that gift. I think God feels joy when we follow through on our promises to him, just as we feel joy when God keeps his promises to us.

While we take the offering, let’s sing the song “Rejoice in the Lord Always” (Philippians 4:4).

Sing “Rejoice in the Lord Always” (Philippians 4:4).

\textbf{Your Promises Bring Us Joy}

\textbf{Say} This is the time of year that we think about giving thanks for all the good things we’ve been given. Let’s thank God for his promises and the joy they bring us. Think for a moment about the promises God has made to us. When you’ve thought of one, raise your hand. When I call on you, say the promise you’ve thought of loud enough for all of us to hear it. Then the rest of us will say, “God, your promises bring us joy. Thank you!” Ready? Here we go.

Call on several children to call out a promise God has made. After each child shares, have the rest of the group respond by praying, “God, your promises bring us joy. Thank you!”
The Source of All Our Joy

**Say**  We're going to use a song as our closing prayer, but we're not going to sing it. We're going to do the motions and let our hands sing for us.

Play "Praise Him."

Motions are in the back of this book.

Lead children in the motions, but let them listen to the words on the CD.

**Pray**  God, you truly are the source of all joy. You take care of us, you love us, and you keep the promises you make to us. We want to give you our praise, our service, and our love. Thank you, God, for giving us joy. In Jesus’ name, amen.
**Jokes for Joy**

**Q:** What can you hold without touching it?
**A:** A conversation

**Knock Knock**
Who’s there?
Sara!
Sara who?
Sara ‘nother way in?

**Q:** What would you call a sleeping bull?
**A:** A bull dozer

**Q:** What state has a friendly greeting for everyone?
**A:** Ohio

**Q:** When do astronauts eat?
**A:** At launch time!

**Q:** What goes Moooooooz?
**A:** A jet flying backward

**Q:** What happened to the man who tried to cross a lion with a goat?
**A:** He had to get a new goat.

**Q:** What kind of pliers do you use in math class?
**A:** Multipliers!

**Q:** What do you call cheese that isn’t yours?
**A:** Nacho cheese!

**Doctor! Doctor!**
I feel like a bell.
Take these pills, and if they don’t help, give me a ring.
Encouragement for Leaders

“For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12).

God’s Word is powerful. Even when you feel like you’re struggling as a teacher, God’s Word is powerfully impacting the lives of the children in your class.