

A Messenger Sent From God

Theme

John the Baptist prepares the way for Jesus.

Object

A bell; a newspaper

Scripture

Mark 1:1-8

Explain to the kids that each time they hear the bell, they are to respond with "Hear ye, hear ye!"

Before the days of printed newspapers, town criers walked through the streets ringing a bell. (Ring bell and wait for kids to respond with "Hear ye, hear ye!") Then they shouted out the news from every street corner announcing the time of town meetings and other items of interest to the people. Even after printed newspapers came along, you could walk the streets of a city and hear the voice of a newspaper boy crying out, "Extra! Extra! Read all about it!" Then he would shout out the day's headlines, hoping to get the attention of those who were passing by so that they would buy a newspaper. (Ring bell and wait for kids to respond with "Hear ye, hear ye!")

Today, people get the news in many different ways. Think for a moment about how your family gets the news. (Allow time, and then invite children to shout out any answers.) Some rely on the newspaper and they read it from cover to cover, some get the news from the Internet, others get the news by listening to the radio. Probably the main way that people get the news today is by watching television. No matter how you get the news, it is important to know what is going on in the world around us. (Ring bell and wait for kids to respond with "Hear ye, hear ye!")

Long before Jesus was born, God spoke through the prophet Isaiah to tell how He would spread the news of the coming of the Messiah. (Ring bell and wait for kids to respond with "Hear ye,

hear ye!") This is what God said through Isaiah, "I will send my messenger to prepare the way. He will be a voice of one crying in the desert, 'Prepare the way for the coming of the Lord! Clear the road for him.'"

John the Baptist was the messenger that God chose to bring this good news to His people. (Ring bell and wait for kids to respond with "Hear ye, hear ye!") John was a very unusual man who wore clothes made of camel hair with a leather belt around his waist. His favorite food was locusts and wild honey. Everyone has something unique or unusual about themselves. What's that for you? (Invite kids to shout out interesting things they like to eat or funny styles of clothes they like to wear like mismatched socks.) John traveled around in the desert preaching that people should repent of their sins and turn to God. Repent means to tell God when you know you have done wrong and stop doing those wrong things. When people listening to John the Baptist confessed their sins, he baptized them in the Jordan River. (Ring bell and wait for kids to respond with "Hear ye, hear ye!")

John the Baptist was very popular and had a great following, but he always told the people about Jesus. "Someone is coming soon who is greater than I am," he said. "He is so much greater that I am not even worthy to stoop down and untie the straps on His sandals." Yes, John was faithful in bringing the news to the people. (Ring bell and wait for kids to respond with "Hear ye, hear ye!")

It's been 2,000 years since God sent His Son, but God still needs messengers to spread the news. This year, as we celebrate our Savior's birth, won't you be God's messenger to share the good news with others? (Ring bell and wait for kids to respond with "Hear ye, hear ye!")

Dear God, we thank You for this very special time of year when we celebrate the birth of Jesus. There are many who don't know about Jesus. Help us be Your messengers and share the good news. In Jesus' name, amen.

Interactive Group Activities

by Carol Williams

Sermon Title: "A Messenger Sent from God"

Scripture Reading: Mark 1:1-8

PREPARE THE PATH MARCH: Set up an obstacle course by placing objects around the room which the children will have to navigate around as they follow a designated leader around the room. Give each child a small bell to ring as they march behind the leader through the objects that are in their path. The leader and children will pick up the items to clear the path as they march. The teacher or a designated helper will be at the end of the marching line putting things back in the path as the march continues and the PATH will have to be cleared each time they come to something in the way. Tell children that someone in today's lesson "prepared the way" for Jesus' coming!

SANDAL RELAY: Divide the class into teams. You will need a sandal for each team. There will be one person from each team at the SANDAL line. The teammates will take turns running to the SANDAL line where they will take off one shoe and the leader will quickly put on a sandal and hook or tie the latch. Then the team player will take off the sandal and put their own shoe back on and run back to the line so the next team player can continue the game. Explain to the children that sandals are mentioned in today's lesson and that they should listen very carefully to what is said about sandals.

BELL ART: Give children a sheet of construction paper and a marker to draw and cut out a large bell. Let them add glitter glue around the edges of the bell. On the bells, the children can write SHARE THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS! Punch a hole at the top of the bell and put a piece of yarn through it to create a hanger.

BELL NECKLACES: The teacher will provide a jingle bell and a piece of red or green ribbon for the children to make a bell necklace to wear during class. Tell the children that whenever the teacher says, "PREPARE THE WAY" they should ring their bells.

BELL ROPE: Give the children a sheet of construction paper with the shape of a bell drawn on it for the children to cut out. Let the children decorate their bells and encourage them to write the names of people who need to hear about JESUS. Have a special prayer time to pray for all the names on their bells! The children will then attach their bells on a strand of Christmas garland using yarn or ornament hangers. The BELL ROPE will then be hung on a wall in the classroom.

BELL BIBLE VERSE: Give each child a large bell cut out of construction paper to decorate and write today's Bible verse around the edges of the bell and PREPARE THE WAY in the middle of the bell. Hang the bells by Christmas ribbon around the room, or let the children take them home to hang for decoration and a remembrance about sharing JESUS during this Christmas season!

SING A SONG: Sing RING THE BELLS, or GOSPEL BELLS (sung to the tune of Jingle Bells ,ie... Gospel bells, Gospel Bells, ring them all the day, ring them while you're at your work and while you're at your play! Hey! Gospel bells, Gospel bells, ring them all the day, ring-out-the-news that Jesus Christ is born on Christmas Day!)

SNACK: Bell shaped cookies that the children can decorate with icing.

Song: "Prepare the Way"

[Words and Music \(pdf\)](#)



[MP3 Accompaniment Track](#)

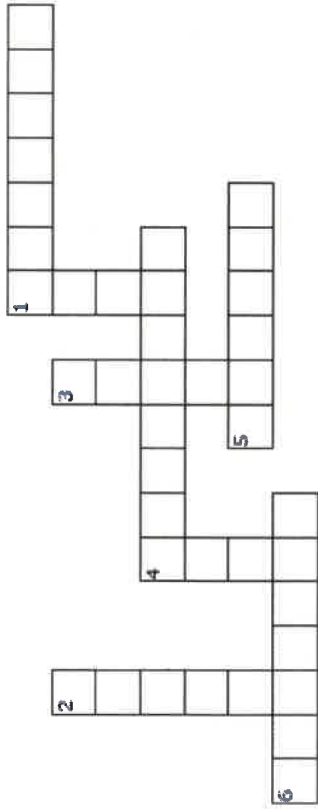
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About Carol Williams

Carol and her husband have served churches in Illinois, Minnesota, Mississippi, Michigan, and Indiana. Carol loves to work with children so you will find her teaching in Junior Church and children's Sunday School. She also has clowning ministry in which she is known as Bubbles tc (the clown).

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Crossword Puzzle



ACROSS

- To make ready ahead of time
- Not having any curves or bends
- A dry, barren region with only a few plants
- To admit your sins to God

DOWN

- A trail made for traveling on foot
- The river where John baptized people
- What people use for speaking
- Actions that break God's law

VOICE	PREPARE	SINS	STRAIGHT
JORDAN	DESERT	PATH	CONFESS



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Children's Worship Bulletin

A Messenger Sent from God

Mark 1:1-8

Word Search

J Z P T V R I V E R T U W T P
 T L U S E L K X B A P T I Z E
 N B X U Y R K G Y S L Z L D Q
 M D E S E R T W J O R D A N P
 F O P S A H N I O F Y B J O R
 U H T T J W R U W R O C K S E
 E J O R J C A F V I T Z B O P
 A V H A H W O F D D L H Z G A
 S U J I O N F N L O O G Y N R
 I H I G N I I I F C C L R J E
 N X I H E E W V Y E U L I Q G
 S O A T Y P R O T K S X H I T
 B P H H I P H I L J T S Z U I
 E T K D Z V V C G T S F P I S
 F P A T H S J E S A N D A L S

HONEY	BAPTIZE	SINS	LOCUSTS	JORDAN
PATHS	RIVER	VOICE	WORTHY	CONFESS
STRAIGHT	WILD	DESERT	PREPARE	SANDALS

Church Name
Address
City

Decoder Puzzle

Each number represents a letter of the alphabet. Substitute the correct letter for the numbers to reveal the coded words.

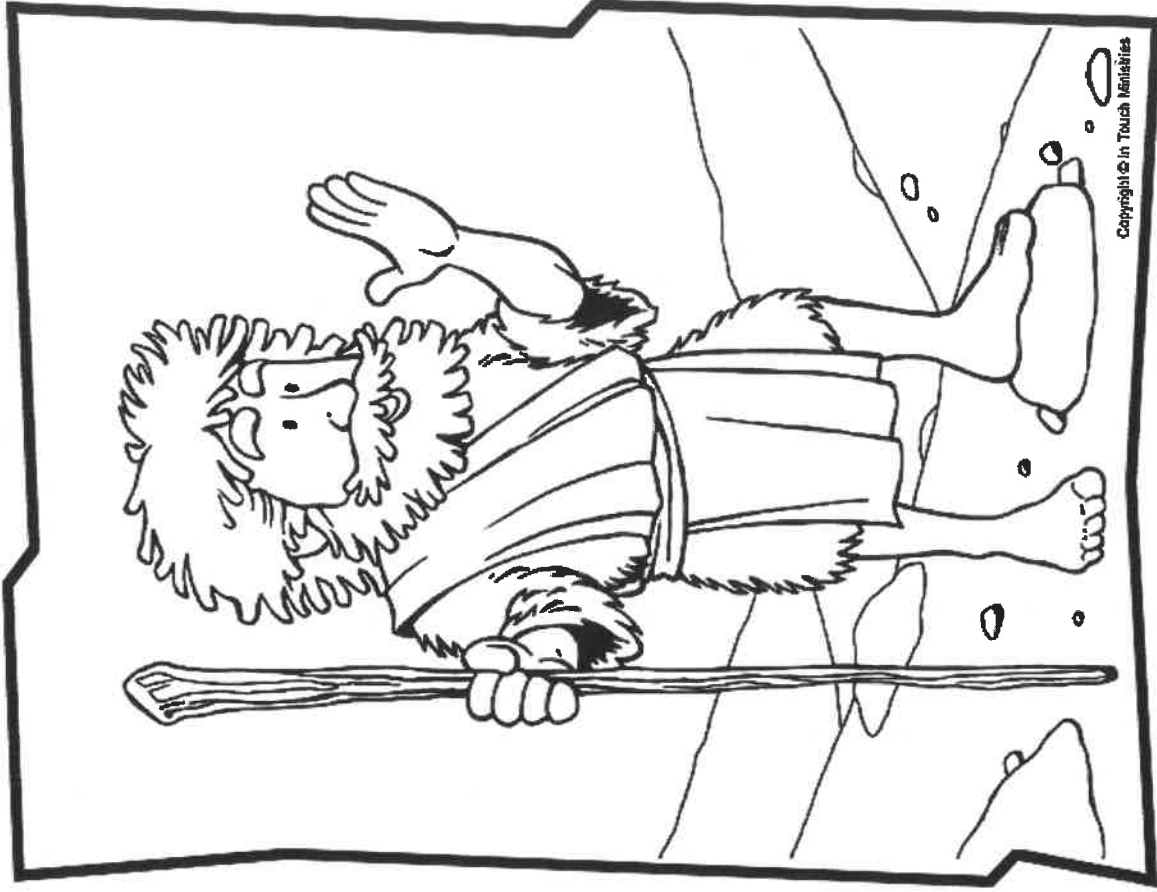
G	V	H	U	L	R	N	W	C	E	P	T	N	X	A	F
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Y	J	S	D	I	U	Z	O	A	M	Q	K	O	I	B	E
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32

- 11-6-10-11-25-6-10 _____
- 2-24-21-9-10 _____
- 20-10-19-10-6-12 _____
- 19-12-6-25-21-1-3-12 _____
- 11-25-12-3-19 _____
- 9-24-7-16-10-19-19 _____
- 19-21-7-19 _____
- 31-25-11-12-21-23-10 _____

BAPTIZE	PREPARE	VOICE	STRAIGHT
SINS	PATHS	DESERT	CONFESS



Color Me!



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JOHN THE BAPTIST

Matthew 3:3, Mark 1:3, Luke 3:4