



Supplies

Bible

- cups of water (1 per person)

Taste and See

Bible Point: God is a friend who's real.

Bible Story: God shows himself to Elijah through ups and downs.
(1 Kings 18–19)

Bible Verse: “We believe, and we know you are the Holy One of God.”
(John 6:69)

SAY

Welcome to Scuba VBS! Imagine you've saved and planned for a wonderful vacation in the Caribbean, complete with a scuba diving trip. It's taken months of planning, and the time has finally arrived to board the plane and head off to your exciting destination!

That's what this week is. Okay, it's admittedly less relaxing than a Caribbean vacation. But it's so much more meaningful! We've spent a long time planning and preparing for this deep dive into faith. Countless volunteers—including many of you—have been helping prepare supplies, decorate, keep track of registrations, and so much more.

And now the time has come to help kids take that plunge into a friendship with God. My hope and prayer for you is that you also can go deeper in your faith this week.

Give each person a cup of water.

Today we'll be exploring that **God is a friend who's real.** (*Thanks, God!*) God showed up for Elijah in some very real ways. To get into the Scuba spirit, let's use water to invite God to show up in real ways this week.

First, take a sip of your water. Feel it refresh your tastebuds. Enjoy its soothing coolness in your throat. Ask God to refresh your heart this week. Allow time for silent reflection.

Next, set your hand on top of your cup and slosh the water around a little bit. Listen to the sound. Pause for listening. Ask God to speak to you. It may be a quiet whisper. Now listen for his voice. Allow about a minute for listening.

Now put your fingers in the water. Feel the cool of it surround your fingers. Pause. Silently ask God to surround our VBS and do big things this week. Allow time.

ASK What other connections do you make between God and water? Take responses from the group.

ASK You got to taste, hear, see, and touch the water—so you had no doubt it was really there! Talk about this with someone sitting nearby. How have you experienced evidence that God is really with you? Share your own brief example, then let pairs discuss for about a minute. If time allows, take responses from willing volunteers.

SAY Listen to what people said about Jesus. Read aloud John 6:69.

God is a friend who's real. (Thanks, God!) As you stay hydrated this week, let each drink of water remind you that God is just as real as the water. He's ready to work in big ways and in small ways this week, so watch for him!

Lead staff in prayer, asking God to show up this week in ways you can see, hear, and feel.



Supplies

- Bible
- sand (a spoonful for each person)
- spoon
- paper plates

Infinite Love

Bible Point: God is a friend who loves.

Bible Story: God shows compassion to the people of Nineveh. (Jonah 1–3)

Bible Verse: “Just as I have loved you, you should love each other.”
(John 13:34)

Ahead of time, put a spoonful of sand on a plate for each person.

SAY Welcome back to another exciting day at Scuba VBS!
Today we’re going to learn that **God is a friend who loves.**
(Thanks, God!)

Let’s try something to get a picture of God’s love.

Give each person a plate with a spoonful of sand.

I’ll give you about two minutes to count as many grains of sand as you can.

Wait about two minutes (it doesn’t have to be exact). Then ask people how many grains they counted.

ASK How did it feel to count grains of sand? Why?

SAY Counting sand may seem silly...or impossible! Just one teaspoon of beach sand contains about 40,000 grains of sand. With that in mind, just imagine how much is on a whole beach! It would be impossible to count.

ASK How does that remind you of God’s love?

SAY God’s love is so much bigger than we can imagine. So let’s try to break it down.

ASK What’s one way you’ve seen God’s love at work?

SAY We just counted a few grains of sand of God’s love. Repeat a few examples people shared. If we were really trying to measure God’s love, we’d just be getting started—much like your attempt to count the grains of sand on your plate. Love is important to God. Here’s how Jesus put it.

Read aloud John 13:34.

ASK Which feels more impossible: counting endless grains of sand or loving the way Jesus did? Talk about that with two people nearby. Allow time for discussion, then take a few responses from the group.

ASK Let's call out some of the ways we can show kids God's love this week. Pause for responses.

SAY God is a friend who loves. (*Thanks, God!*) And this week, he's showing his love for kids through you. Thank you for taking time to be God's hands and feet this week.

PRAY God, thank you for showing your love for us in countless ways. We ask that this week, we can be vessels of your love and that kids may understand the vastness of how much you love them because of the interactions they have with their leaders. In Jesus' name, amen.



Supplies

Bible

Under Pressure

Bible Point: God is a friend we can trust.

Bible Story: Jesus calms a storm. (Mark 4:35-41)

Bible Verse: “I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart.”
(John 14:27)

SAY Today we'll be discovering how God is a friend we can trust.
(Thanks, God!)

In the Bible story we'll explore today, Jesus' friends felt overwhelmed with fear and worry when their boat was caught in a storm...and Jesus was just sleeping through the whole ordeal.

Let's think about our own fears and worries and the pressure they put on us.

When scuba divers dive underwater, they feel pressure on top of them. The deeper they go, the more pressure they'll feel... because water is heavy!

Let's experience a little bit of that pressure.

Have everyone find a partner. One partner will sit, and the other partner will stand behind them and gently press down on their shoulders.

As you feel the pressure—the weight of the world on your shoulders—spend some time in prayerful reflection about your fears and worries. Commit them to Jesus, and trust him to handle all that weight. If you're the partner pressing down, simply pray for peace and freedom for your partner. Allow about a minute. Then have partners switch roles. Repeat the directions, and allow time for everyone to pray.

ASK How did it feel when your partner released the pressure on you?

ASK What would Jesus need to do in your life for you to feel your everyday pressures lighten? Let partners talk about this question for a minute.

SAY Maybe these words from Jesus will help take some of the pressure off.

Read John 14:27.

SAY Scuba divers do feel pressure. But they also come back up for air. We weren't made to live under pressure forever. Jesus offered to take our burdens and give us his light yoke instead (see Matthew 11:28-30). Will you trust him enough to hand off your stresses and worries?

PRAY God, we trust you. Sometimes it's hard for us to let go of what we think is control. But we give you all our stresses and worries—everything that adds pressure to us. It's already in your hands anyway. In Jesus' name, amen.



Supplies

Bible

- water bottles (1 per person)

★ SCUBA CLUE ★

You may want to find an audio clip of the sounds of crashing waves to play as people are envisioning the tide coming in and going out.

Eternal Tides

Bible Point: God is a friend forever.

Bible Story: Jesus dies and comes back to life. (John 18–20)

Bible Verse: “I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying.” (John 11:25)

SAY

Today at Scuba VBS, we get to explore the most important part of the Bible: Jesus’ death and resurrection. We’ll look at how **God is a friend forever.** (*Thanks, God!*)

Forever can be hard to imagine. We’re used to things that start and end. But the oceans can help us picture forever.

Close your eyes and picture yourself on a beach, watching the waves crash onto the shore. Pause. The longer you stand there, the closer the waves get to you as the tide comes in. Pause. Then the tide starts to recede again. And if you stood there for several days, you’d see the same thing happen over and over. Pause. The tide comes in, the tide goes out. Pause. The tide comes in, (pause) the tide goes out. The ocean waves never stop crashing onto the shore. Pause. The tide cycle doesn’t end.

Now you can open your eyes. We’re going to use our own little waves to help us think about how **God is a friend forever.** (*Thanks, God!*)

Give each person a water bottle, and have team members take about 10 sips so their bottles are nearly half full. Direct team members to put the lids on tightly and hold the bottles sideways. Then have them gently rock the bottles back and forth to make waves in the bottles.

ASK

As you watch the waves, think about your own journey with Jesus. When did it begin? What experiences in your life have brought you closer to Jesus? What people have influenced your faith? What do you look forward to about forever with Jesus? Allow time for people to reflect. (You may want to play a bit of the instrumental version of “Your Friend” from the Sing & Play Splash Music CD.)

ASK

Now think about the kids you’re serving this week. What do you know about their faith journeys? What are your hopes for their faith to continue forever? Allow time for reflection.

ASK

Tell someone near you about the parts of your faith journey you thought about. Allow time.

SAY

None of us got where we are on our own. One thing that I'm sure is common with all our faith stories is that there were people who helped us see God more clearly.

This week, you are the people who are helping kids see God more clearly. You're showing them that **God is a friend forever**. (*Thanks, God!*) You're teaching this truth of Jesus:

Read John 11:25.

Today's a big day at VBS because it's the day kids will learn about Jesus' death and resurrection. You have the chance to help kids begin a forever friendship with Jesus. Let's pray.

PRAY

Jesus, thank you that we can look forward to forever with you. Today we pray for our kids to have open hearts to begin a friendship with you. Show us the role you'd like us to play in helping kids take these steps. In your name, amen.



Supplies

Bible

All for One and One for All

Bible Point: God is a friend for everyone.

Bible Story: Lydia believes in Jesus. (Acts 16:11-15)

Bible Verse: “For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16)

SAY

All week I’ve watched as this amazing team has dived deep into God’s friendship with kids. It’s been such a joy to see! You’ve made sure everyone feels welcome and included, so today’s Point is a natural way to end our week: **God is a friend for everyone.** (*Thanks, God!*)

Sometimes we can be tempted to focus on what makes us different from other people. Or we can look at people who live differently from us and judge them. And if we’re not careful, we can start to think, “Surely God’s given up on *them*.”

Let’s do a little experiment to help us embrace differences.

Call up one willing volunteer, and be sure everyone knows his or her name. Your directions will be given to this one volunteer.

Your job is to form a chain that doesn’t leave anyone out. But each time you add someone, you’ll have to find something that’s different about them compared with you. Let’s start off easy—find one person who’s wearing a different color shirt from yours. Allow time for the volunteer to link arms with someone with a different color shirt.

How about another easy one? Add someone to the chain who is a [man/woman—whatever is the opposite of your volunteer]. Allow time for the volunteer and the linked person to add a third person to the link.

Now you’re on your own. Others can suggest differences, but you won’t get any more help from me! The only rule is that you can’t reuse any criteria you’ve already used. So you can’t find someone who has a different color shirt again.

Keep going until you’ve found a way to add every person to your chain. Allow time. The differences may continue to be superficial at first, but eventually they should get deeper and get your volunteers talking about differences they might not be aware of.

Once everyone is in the chain, they can stay linked as you continue.

SAY **God is a friend for everyone.** (*Thanks, God!*) That means he's not looking to love only people who are just like you.

Think about the kids you've interacted with this week. They may be different from you, but God loves them so much. And you've been able to show them that!

ASK Share about a child you've gotten to know this week who's really different from you. What's one thing you appreciate about that child?

SAY This week we've gotten to engage in some amazing experiences with kids. We've seen them be wowed by sciency-fun object lessons. We've seen them get immersed in Bible stories. We've seen them run and play super-fun games. And all of that has helped them understand God's friendship through Jesus.

But you are the secret ingredient to making all that meaningful! Through relationship with you and each other, they've seen that **God is a friend for everyone.** (*Thanks, God!*)

That's because God is all about relationship. Listen to this.

Read John 3:16.

God is not a distant God. God stepped into our world because he loves us. He wants a friendship with us!

So, from the bottom of my heart, thank you for sharing that friendship with kids. Thank you for the sacrifices you made to be here. Thank you for everything you did to show kids God's love.

ASK What's one thing you hope kids take away from this week? Call out those hopes.

Allow a bit of time for this sharing with the whole group. Consider this a time of inspiration about what Jesus can do through your VBS program!

PRAY God, we're so thankful that you're a friend for everyone—no matter who we are or what we've done. I pray that each child would walk away from this week knowing that your love and friendship are for them and for every person they meet. In Jesus' name, amen.