CHARTING A COURSE FOR VBS 2020
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A Unique Year for VBS.
It may be the Most Evangelistic Ever!

Many things stand out about VBS leaders, but one amazing skill is their ability to adapt and work with almost anything. Part of the giant stage decorations could fall down, but VBS leaders know that’s why someone invented duct tape. Others have had their impromptu stage debut when a skit leader couldn’t make it one night. And more people than we could ever count have found themselves doing a crazy activity they would never have imagined doing—and in the process, have made a memory that will last a lifetime.

The COVID-19 situation has been unique and possibly the most serious situation many of us have faced. But what has stood out is the number of VBS leaders who are facing it with the same spirit as they would any other challenge. Many VBS leaders still plan to hold their programs in some form this summer—and, as it has throughout its long history, VBS can go on and even thrive in these times. If this situation drives us to grasp why VBS is important and not just how to do it, that could give your VBS greater purpose and effectiveness than ever before!

Every ministry and every VBS is different. Through prayerful thought and planning with your church’s pastoral leadership and VBS team, you can develop an approach that will best reach children in your area for the Lord. While developing your plan, be sure to keep in mind CDC guidelines and local directives. It’s especially important for all of us to remember we can completely trust God—this summer is in His hands, and we can entrust the hearts and lives of children to Him!

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this summer is in His hands, and we can entrust the hearts and lives of children to Him!

Even more important than the buzz that VBS creates in a church is the eternal impact on students who accept Jesus as their Savior and give their lives to Him. This guide provides many ideas to start your VBS team charting a course to make Big Fish Bay one of your ministry’s most effective and evangelistic Vacation Bible Schools ever.
Exploring The Evangelistic VBS™

This summer, VBS students everywhere will be going to Big Fish Bay—a place for adventure and sailing toward new horizons. What a perfect opportunity to emphasize what has long been a hallmark of RBP’s VBS. We are known as The Evangelistic VBS™ because of an effective approach to sharing the gospel: the gospel is integrated clearly so that students will grasp the main points and understand what they are doing when they accept the good news of Jesus.

What better time is there for evangelism than this summer, especially if VBS has to be taken to homes or at least done in a way that directly impacts the neighborhoods where people live? That’s an opportunity, not just an obstacle! For many ministries, VBS 2020 could be the most evangelistic VBS ever. Parents and families may be more involved than at any other time, and that can be a good thing. Without VBS this summer, or if it’s put off until next year, there’s no guarantee your church will have another chance with some of these families.

With a situation like the one this summer, what ways can VBS be done effectively?

In this guide, we suggest considering four variations:
• Traditional VBS with adjustable dates or late-summer VBS
• At-Home VBS, which may be done virtually
• Small-Group or Backyard VBS
• Flexible-Schedule VBS

Questions are inevitable. To assist, we have compiled a FAQ section at the end of this guide. If you require additional assistance, please contact us.

Join the Conversation!
Going to Big Fish Bay during the Prime Time of Summer

A Traditional VBS with Adjustable Dates or Late-Summer VBS

For many people, summer has a sweet spot. That time frame this year can be a bit of a moving target, so it's good to plan VBS with some flexibility and several possible dates. This flexibility should have advantages if it becomes necessary to have VBS later in the summer. Not only could it give time for restrictions to lift, but it also places VBS during a prime time. Your VBS may hit the calendar this year when many kids and families are excited to get out. VBS could be a huge draw for them! And there's a ready-made link with fall children’s programs at church, since they would begin soon after VBS.

Here are some ideas for how this might look.

1. Consider building flexibility into the schedule. It’s best to plan for at least two possible dates so that if one is affected by COVID-19, VBS can be moved to the other date. It’s recommended that printed or written promotional materials omit any dates for VBS in order to allow this flexibility.

2. The Fourth of July might be a great opportunity for advertising VBS, with or without a parade. There will probably be some kind of community celebration, online or otherwise, and your church may be able to participate in it.

3. With online meeting platforms, you can plan for VBS with your team even now. But if your planning timeline does become condensed to much shorter than usual, it can still be done! People may even be more focused on preparing for VBS if it isn’t too far down the road.

4. You could reassure parents that their children will be safe at Big Fish Bay by letting them know the precautions you’ve taken to ensure applicable health safety guidelines are followed.

5. If the church calendar is packed in late summer, consider multitasking ministries. For example, why not combine the church picnic with the VBS celebration for even greater outreach?

6. Another option if the schedule is packed is to condense VBS into three days, using the lessons from Dock 1, Dock 3, and Dock 5. Or cover Docks 1, 3, and 4, and save Dock 5 for a back-to-school kickoff.

7. For an even tighter link to fall ministries and an exciting atmosphere, consider using VBS decorations in your children’s rooms for Sunday School or children’s church.

Children have had to endure many changes along with the rest of us. Wouldn’t Vacation Bible School be a wonderful highlight of the year for them to look forward to? Whatever calendar date or shape it has to take, VBS can still be a powerful ministry for leading children to Jesus and impacting them for eternity.
Bringing Big Fish Bay into the Home

At-Home VBS

Big Fish Bay is built on adventure. It reverberates with the excitement of both the ocean and discovering God's mercy. This summer may bring an opportunity for both if an at-home VBS format is necessary!

This format is an excellent option to consider if guidelines indicate that people should remain mostly at home or if it’s still not ideal to hold gatherings of children.

An at-home VBS may prove to be an exciting approach for engaging families, students, and churches that nobody would have expected a short while ago. VBS—and the gospel—would be brought directly into homes in a unique and powerful way as the students' homes are transformed into VBS. This is great for students who thrive on being able to do things at their own pace, and parents who don't know the Lord will be engaged even more closely with the gospel. Plus, students may love the excitement of doing a new kind of VBS!

1. The church would assemble a kit for each VBS family. Kits could include a craft for each child, game ideas that the family could do together, a packaged snack for each child, a student activity sheet for each child, and perhaps even a gift for each child from our catalog or webstore. You could either assemble a complete kit for the week or prepare a new one for each day.

2. It's important that families register their children in some way so a church can determine how to prepare kits with supplies. For remote registration, a church could use a website like ticketleap.com, the telephone, and/or email.

3. Be sure to include simple instructions in the kit as a guide for parents.

4. Friendly VBS team members could deliver the kits to homes, or you could also set up a drive-through pickup at the church.

5. The Resource CD is packed with resources that you could email to parents or print and include in the at-home kit.

6. For Assembly Time, you could set up an area of the church with exciting Big Fish Bay decorations and cutouts, and then livestream the assembly time online at the set time. You can livestream “Big Fish Bay” and many of the songs from the Worship DVD, provided that you follow certain guidelines (see “Permissions” on page 40). And in this format, students can still enjoy Assembly Time activities such as the Will Ketchit skits from the Director Guide.
For the Oliver T. Otter puppet skits, only a large stage is needed. Any large object, such as a lighthouse decoration, is perfect for a puppeteer to get behind so that the puppet team isn’t crammed behind the traditional puppet stage.

7. You could also livestream the teachers giving the lessons. Another option is to record teachers presenting the lessons, and then premiere them live or make them accessible on-demand to families through an online platform.

8. The lessons also contain many activities and experiments that families would enjoy doing together at home. Before VBS, it’s a good idea to review the lessons and materials so you can offer suggestions for activities that families can do.

9. Activities and contests can also be done online. Many children and parents are used to doing these kinds of activities and enjoy them very much.

10. Classes could enjoy interaction through online meeting platforms, with appropriate cautions and parental consent.

11. Classroom interaction could be combined with personal interaction with the teacher through online avenues and/or phone calls to give this modified VBS the personal approach that kids need.

12. Sometime after VBS, if it is safe to do so, consider hosting a kickoff for the fall children’s programs with a large gathering of all students and families from VBS to celebrate what happened at Big Fish Bay.

Remote ministry isn’t a new idea—it has a long history full of great effectiveness for the gospel. This VBS could be just the exciting kind of adventure your Big Fish Bay ocean explorers are looking for! And an at-home format could bring the excitement of VBS and the good news of Jesus to families in a unique and direct way.
Taking Big Fish Bay into the Neighborhood

Small-Group or Backyard VBS

Summer has always been a great time to get together with friends and family, out on the deck or in the backyard. Every place around a bay is unique and exciting! Why not combine the two concepts and have VBS in multiple locations around town? This VBS is held with smaller groups of children that meet in backyards, parks, or any appropriate location. If smaller groups may meet but guidelines still warn against a large-group setting, this could be the option for you. A big advantage is the connection with neighborhoods—people won’t miss the fact that VBS is going on.

1. In this format, church members volunteer to host small groups of VBS children in their backyards, front yards, or anywhere there is enough space.
2. Consider having yard signs printed with the Big Fish Bay logo that the hosts can display. Or in some neighborhoods, a mini-float could roll down the street to let everyone know about VBS—perhaps a boat on a trailer with decorations such as the Big Fish Bay theme banner on the side!
3. The leaders are the adults who are hosting the club plus at least one adult leader or teacher from the church. They would lead activities and all the fun, such as the skits from the Director Guide. These hosts would have to pass appropriate background checks and meet all church and government requirements for children’s workers.
4. The local church would still oversee the small groups and distribute any needed Big Fish Bay materials.
5. Consider having one age group at each home, such as primary at one home and middler at another.
6. The Director Guide contains many great snack options for a small-group VBS, but if there is any concern about handling food, individually packaged snacks are another option.
7. Before VBS, small-group leaders should review the Director Guide and the teacher book and search for options that will fit their group and any necessary requirements (e.g., games that involve minimal contact).
8. The church can distribute decorations to several host homes for an exciting Big Fish Bay look—for example, Big Fish Bay Nautical Tablecloths for picnic tables. A set of jumbo posters could be distributed among several homes, and theme banners provide an eye-catching decoration on back-deck railings. Many gifts and awards for students can be found at rbpVBS.org.
9. For exciting Big Fish Bay singing, hosts can play the Worship DVD using a screen and DVD player.

10. Another option is for a church to livestream Assembly Time (see “Bringing Big Fish Bay into the Home” on page 6 and “Permissions” on page 40).

11. The excitement of VBS can be stretched farther into the year. One way is to connect VBS to fall children’s programs by using Big Fish Bay decorations to give a fun themed look to Sunday School rooms.

A VBS that happens in a small-group setting can be powerful. The many opportunities for relationships to develop among students and leaders can have an eternal impact. Sometime after VBS, if it is safe to do so, you could also kick off the fall children’s programs with a large gathering of all students and families from VBS to celebrate what happened at Big Fish Bay.
Flexibility in VBS Format & Scheduling

A look back at the history of VBS shows that the most set-in-stone rule for VBS formats is that nothing is set in stone. VBS programs have taken place over five weeks, three days, or one day, to name a few. And VBS has been held in just about every imaginable location. This VBS flexibility could be just what your ministry needs, especially if guidelines push the window for VBS to later in the summer or even to early fall.

**Option 1:** Consider using Big Fish Bay during the summer as a five-week children’s program on a weeknight or Sunday night after restrictions have lifted but before your Kids4Truth Clubs or other midweek programs begin in the fall.

**Option 2:** If group sizes still need to be limited when VBS happens but some people can gather, you might consider a three-day VBS with two groups and alternating days. From the registrations for VBS, choose two equal groups. Group 1 will attend VBS on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Group 2 will attend on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. You could either have two lessons per day for two days and lesson 5 for the third day, or use only lessons 1, 3, and 5.

**Option 3:** A shorter format might fit your church’s schedule and allow VBS to be pushed past any restrictions. It could also allow for smaller group sizes, as the shorter VBS may allow for VBS to run more than once.

- **A weekend event**, with lessons 1 and 2 on Friday, lessons 3 and 4 on Saturday, and lesson 5 on Sunday night. In this format, the rotations take place between the lessons on Friday and Saturday and after the lesson on Sunday night, and each would be shortened by about 5 minutes. Could a Labor Day Weekend event like this be a great fall kickoff for your children’s ministry?

- **A one-day event**, with a modified lesson schedule to keep the time from becoming too long. Consider lessons 1 and 3 in the morning with activities in between, and lesson 5 in the afternoon.

**Option 4:** Another option for limiting group sizes is to offer two times for VBS with two groups of students. One time slot could be in the morning and one in the evening. Each group would be limited to as many students and workers as are allowed in the location.
by current guidelines. Rotations would be simplified, e.g., if the group is small enough, the whole group can rotate through games, crafts, and snacks together. There could also be two groups for rotations (younger students and older students).

With many of these options, a great advantage is that you can decorate in all-out fashion with exciting Big Fish Bay decorations. Any supplies like gifts or awards might even have more effect because students would receive more of them on fewer days. A shorter or modified time frame doesn't have to mean less impact—in fact, there may be more intensity, and the results could be more memorable because of it!

A look back at the history of VBS shows that the most set-in-stone rule for VBS formats is that nothing is set in stone.
Adapting Big Fish Bay to Your Setting

The Marina (General Assembly)

Even in a situation where it must be livestreamed, The Marina will be an exciting part of students’ visit to Big Fish Bay. The hope and excitement they see in their leaders will make a huge impact on them, especially now! During these challenging times, which children are facing and feeling as well as adults, The Marina introduces a VBS where children will discover the mercy and love of God, Who is always in control of everything.

Feel free to simplify or expand activities, depending on your church’s resources. Here are options for The Marina in an at-home VBS format and a small-group (“backyard”) VBS.

At-Home VBS

The Marina will fit a livestreamed format well! It’s simple enough to capture on camera, since most of the activities can occur on one stage. Set the scene for Big Fish Bay by decorating the stage with exciting Big Fish Bay decorations. In general, it will be best if the time length is a little shorter than in the Director Guide (about 10 minutes) so that it is just right for the attention spans of students who are watching at home.

- Follow the instructions in the Director Guide for the opening and closing assemblies on pages 3 and 5 but adapt to your VBS situation.
- You can livestream many of the VBS videos on the Worship DVD, provided you follow certain guidelines (see page 40, “Permissions”).
- Omit the portion about students filing into the assembly area. Instead of dismissing students to their classes, give a brief transition into the lesson and activities that students will be doing at home (e.g., point them to where to find the livestreamed lessons).
- For the puppet stage, you can set it up in view of the camera if you don’t want to move the camera, or off to the side if you’re moving the camera or if the stage needs to be longer due to needs for social distancing in your area. In the portions of the scripts where “Levi” appears, students will enjoy seeing him pop up as someone briefly moves Levi or the fin into view at the edge of the screen.
Small-Group ("Backyard") VBS
The Marina will add extra excitement to the small-group VBS format, which is already strong on relationships! There are two options that could be used, depending on the needs in your VBS.

- Option 1: Livestream The Marina from your church, following the suggestions given above. Each small group watches The Marina at the beginning and end of their session for the day.
- Option 2: The Marina can also be adapted for use in each small group without livestreaming. The small group would either use their own Worship DVD, music CD, or another music resource for song time. You could either omit the puppet scripts, or Oliver T. Otter could visit all the small groups on a rotating basis. The leaders of each small group could perform the Will Ketchit skits if desired.

Closing Program (Post-VBS)
One of the most exciting parts of VBS is when everyone comes together in a large group for powerful singing, attention-getting lessons, and fun activities. This is admittedly the tradeoff of having an at-home or small-group VBS. But what if you could still have the excitement of a large group—only postponed?

- Consider scheduling the closing program for some time after VBS, when people are allowed to assemble and will feel comfortable doing so.
- This could be a powerful way to bring families into your church and celebrate all that happened in VBS!
- It could be used as a back-to-school event that connects the excitement of what happened in VBS with your church’s upcoming fall ministries for children and families.
- You could include a few of the games from the Director Guide for children to enjoy.
- Some suggestions for the closing program are found on page 46 of the Director Guide; simply modify them as needed for your setting.
Suggested Lighthouse Point Modifications for Pre-Primary

Your VBS has the potential of being even more effective than ever this summer, in several ways. Even if it must happen in students' homes, it can connect with families who may be looking for fun and engaging things for the children to do. And the gospel can have a more direct impact on homes than ever! This guide offers selections from the teacher book activities that would be great for children or families to do at home, with modifications wherever necessary.

If your VBS will be in a small-group or backyard format, most of the lesson activities don't need much modification. They are already designed to work effectively with small groups. You may need to make minor adjustments. For example, a whiteboard or poster board may need to be placed on an easel outdoors or poster board taped to an exterior wall. But most activities will easily fit a small-group VBS setting.

If your VBS will happen in the students' homes, here are several ways for making it a fun and effective experience:

• Creativity is welcome! These suggestions are only a guide. They don't necessarily cover all the options and are intended only as a help for modifying the material.
• The three lesson sections (Introduction, Explore the Bible, and Decision Time) can often be taught as written over a livestream. Occasionally modifications will be necessary, such as those that are offered in the guide.
• Teachers and helpers can do many of the activities over a livestream, but families may also enjoy doing some of the activities together.
• Many families love activities in an even greater way due to a high volume of “remote” learning and work. That's one great thing about Big Fish Bay—the activities are hands-on, connect with children, and can draw in their families!
• Try to keep things as simple as possible for families who are doing at-home activities. You can include any instructions necessary in their at-home kit at the beginning of VBS, so they'll know what to expect and prepare for.
• While several options are listed for each lesson, you can choose one or two that will be best for the families in your VBS.
• Before VBS, teachers should practice on camera to be sure everything is coming through as it should (e.g., using visual books and other visuals on camera). This will help the lessons to go smoothly when VBS begins.
• A copy of the salvation poster is included on the back of the student activity sheets and also on the back of the Family Fun Sheet. Teachers can point students to one of these locations when teaching from the salvation poster.
• The lesson visual poster set can be attached to the wall behind the teacher on the livestream. The only lesson visual posters that are needed for each lesson are the map and the visual art poster for the day.
• The verse poster for each lesson can also be attached to the wall behind the teacher.
• For Decision Time, consider setting up before VBS a way for students to easily contact the appropriate VBS staff member and speak with someone about salvation or other spiritual matters.
Selected Activities and Modifications

DOCK 1
• WELCOME
  • Option 1: Science Station—Sink or Float—This would be a great activity for families to do together at home.
  • Option 2: What’s in the Lighthouse?—Families can create a pretend lighthouse using large cardboard boxes if available, hoop canopy tent, or other imaginative building materials.
  • Option 3: Let's Sail! Dramatic Play—This activity can be done at home using a sturdy laundry basket. Omit the other items for simplicity, but they could also be added if desired.
• INTRODUCTION
  • A parent or sibling could hide any object and the student tries to find it.
• DISCOVER!
  • Option 1: Consider including a set of Jonah mini sticker scenes in each students’ at-home kit.
  • Option 2: Role Play Jonah—Encourage students to role-play the story of Jonah using one of their own action figures or dolls.
• SCRIPTURE MEMORY
  • During the actions for the memory verse, students can hug a sibling or parent.
  • Option 1: Row and Review—Students can do this activity while watching the teacher on the livestream.
• APPLY IT NOW!
  • Option 1: God’s Mercy Never Ends—During the livestream, the teacher can lead the motions as the students follow.

DOCK 2
• WELCOME
  • Option 2: Singing with the Whales—If the livestream will allow for it, a recording could be played.
  • Option 3: What’s in the Lighthouse?—Families can create a pretend lighthouse using large cardboard boxes if available, hoop canopy tent, or other imaginative building materials.
• INTRODUCTION
  • The teacher can invite students to pretend to sit in a boat and watch for humpback whales, while talking about the whales and showing pictures. The children’s vivid imaginations will do the rest!
• EXPLORE THE BIBLE!
  • The illustrations with a paper bag fish will work just as well on a livestream as in the classroom.
  • The whole family can have fun creating a “big fish.” They can drape blankets or sheets over a table in the dining room or the backs of chairs in the living room to make a tent “fish.” After dimming the lights if desired, they pretend to be inside the fish.
• DISCOVER!
  • Option 2: Consider including a set of Jonah mini sticker scenes in each students’ at-home kit.
• SCRIPTURE MEMORY
  • Option 1: Like Jonah—The teacher can lead the students in saying the verse while doing the actions.
• Option 2: From the Belly of the Fish—If the family constructed a “big fish” for Explore the Bible time, instead of getting out of the fish, students can go inside the fish as they say the memory verse along with the teacher.

• APPLY IT NOW!
  • Option 1: God Shows Mercy—The teacher can lead the action song on the livestream as the students do the motions.

DOCK 3

• WELCOME
  • Option 1: Science Station—Seashell Sorting—Students could use a sandbox if available or a container with sand or dirt. If seashells aren’t available, small rocks can be used for seashells.
  • Option 3: What’s in the Lighthouse—Families can create a pretend lighthouse using large cardboard boxes if available, hoop canopy tent, or other imaginative building materials. If a family has any of the items described in the activity, they can place the items in their lighthouse.

• INTRODUCTION
  • For a “walk on the beach,” parents or siblings can hide any smaller objects around the house. Seashells are great if available, but other items such as small treats will also work. Students “walk on the beach” (around the house) and collect the “seashells.”

• EXPLORE THE BIBLE!
  • Students can walk in place where indicated in the lesson.
  • Instead of students walking from one wall of the classroom to the other, teachers can encourage children to walk in place and show what they think Jonah’s face looked like as he said “God is going to destroy this city” (without actually shouting, to keep the volume down in the house).

• DISCOVER!
  • Option 2: Sticker Review—Consider including a set of Jonah mini sticker scenes in each students’ at-home kit.
  • Option 3: Gospel ABCs—The teacher can lead students in making the ABC shapes from the salvation poster, or students can follow the directions in their student activity sheets.

• SCRIPTURE MEMORY
  • Option 2: Cry Out like Jonah—Students cup their hands to their mouths as indicated in the activity while saying the verse but speak in an “inside voice.”

• APPLY IT NOW!
  • Option 1: Spread His Mercy—Instead of teachers or helpers acting out scenarios, students use their own action figures or dolls and act out a scenario the teacher suggests. Another option is to act out the scenario with a sibling.
  • Option 2: I Did Wrong! Forgive Me, God!—The teacher leads students in repeating the prayer after each statement, without forcing children to pray if they do not want to do so.
**DOCK 4**

- **WELCOME**
  - Option 2: Mini Tide Pool—Students can use their own Play-Doh to make a pretend tide pool as they learn what is in a tide pool from the activity. They would simply omit any of the other items that they don’t have. If desired, include a small can of Play-Doh in each at-home kit. (It may be useful for other Pre-Primary activities as well.)
  - Option 3: What’s in the Lighthouse—Families can create a pretend lighthouse using large cardboard boxes if available, hoop canopy tent, or other imaginative building materials. If they have any of the other items described in the activity, they can place them in their lighthouse, while omitting Oliver T. Otter.

- **INTRODUCTION**
  - A puppeteer could still perform the dialogue with the teacher using Oliver T. Otter. Or if a puppeteer isn’t available, the teacher can discuss otters in this way:
  - “Otters spend most of their time in the water, not out of the water. Our lesson today is about being thankful and having God’s love for people. Imagine if you were an otter. Would you have anything to be thankful for? Well, God gave otters super-thick fur to keep them warm and waterproof. He gave them pouches under their front arms. When they dive for food, they can stash extra food in their pouches! When they come to the surface, an otter can flip over on its back and use its belly as a table. God has created otters with just what they need. They can even nap on their backs, floating in the water. God designed otters with some amazing things. If otters were people, they could be very thankful! In our lesson today, we are going to see how Jonah felt after God showed mercy to the people of Nineveh and did not destroy their city. Do you think Jonah was thankful when God showed love to all those people? Let’s go to Bible time to find out.”

- **EXPLORE THE BIBLE!**
  - Instead of having students actually cheer out of joy at the beginning of Explore the Bible, the teacher can invite students to think of something they could cheer about, like a birthday or other special event.

- **DISCOVER!**
  - Grow or Wilt—Students can still pretend to be a plant growing or wilting after each statement.

- **SCRIPTURE MEMORY**
  - Option 1: Copy Oliver—The teacher or a puppeteer leads memory time with Oliver T. Otter over the livestream, saying the verse in a variety of ways as the students follow Oliver.
  - If desired, the puppet can be omitted but students still say the verse in a variety of ways—e.g., loudly, softly, high pitched, low pitched, in a sing-song voice. If space allows, they could say it while hopping up and down.

- **APPLY IT NOW!**
  - Option 1: Help Me Be More Patient, Loving, Kind—Students sing the songs with the actions, but hug a sibling or parent instead of hugging a friend.
DOCK 5

• WELCOME
  • Option 1: The Lighthouse—With laundry baskets, boxes, or plastic totes, children can still pretend to be sailing in “boats” as they’re shown possible light patterns with a flashlight, either by the teacher over the livestream or by a parent at home.
  • Option 2: What’s in the Lighthouse—Families can create a pretend lighthouse using large cardboard boxes if available, hoop canopy tent, or other imaginative building materials. If available, they can place toy boats by their lighthouse and use a flashlight as they pretend to be lighthouse lights.

• INTRODUCTION
  • Students can devise their own light signals or continue the one they devised in Welcome time, using flashlights or an appropriate nearby light switch.

• EXPLORE THE BIBLE!
  • Even though students can’t be heard by the teacher, they can still repeat after the teacher each statement that ends with “Jesus loves me” or “God loves me.”
  • The students can still show what their faces would look like if they saw glorious, gleaming angels, even though the teacher can’t see the students’ faces.

• DECISION TIME
  • The teacher can invite students to say John 3:16 at home as he or she quotes it over the livestream. Students say their own names in place of the two words listed in the activity.

• DISCOVER!
  • Option 1: God Sent Us His Only Son—Instead of a friend, students hug and sign “love” to a sibling or parent.
  • Option 2: Story Rewind—The teacher reviews Lesson 5 over the livestream using visual book 5, showing each page and pausing for a moment for students to think or say what that page is about at home. After the pause, the teacher tells what the page is about.

• SCRIPTURE MEMORY
  • Option 2: Copy the Leader—The teacher suggests an action for students to mimic while they say the verse if space allows them to do so safely. Each time they say the verse, they should use a different action. Possible actions include clapping, standing on one foot, flapping wings, and swimming like an otter.

• APPLY IT NOW!
  • Option 1: Jesus Loves You and Me!—The teacher can either use a whiteboard as suggested in the book or draw a cross on a piece of paper if the camera can show it closely enough.
  • Option 2: Be the Lighthouse—Omit the portions about a flashlight and students walking around the circle. Instead, the teacher can play the music CD loudly enough to be heard over the livestream. Each time the teacher stops the music at random, students think of one way they can show God’s mercy.
Suggested Lighthouse Point Modifications for Primary

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Selected Activities and Modifications

DOCK 1
• WELCOME
  • Option 1: Ship in a Storm—With the help of a parent or older sibling, students can do this activity at home.
• INTRODUCTION
  • Instead of using poster board signs, parents can use regular 8½ x 11 paper for the four signs and place them on different sides of the room.
• EXPLORE THE BIBLE!
  • Students pretend to be sailors where indicated in the lesson.
  • Families can collect any lightweight, soft household items to use as cargo, such as empty cartons. Omit the storm sound effects and mister bottle. Place a beach towel on the floor as the ship. Students carry the “cargo” on board and cast it gently “overboard” as written in the lesson.
• DISCOVER!
  • Option 1: Hide-and-Seek—Parents or siblings can hide some items around the house, and students hunt for the hidden objects.
• SCRIPTURE MEMORY
  • Option 1: Buddy Up—Instead of buddying up with a classmate, students and siblings or parents can help each other learn the verse.
• APPLY IT NOW!
  • Option 1: Forgiven—Consider providing one red and one white piece of paper in the at-home kits. A student can draw a cross on a piece of white paper, and in or beside the cross write something wrong that people their age do. Make sure students know that Jesus loves us so much that He chose to die on the cross to take the punishment for the wrong things we do. Then students cut a large red heart and tape or place it over the words they wrote on the cross.
  • Option 2: Where Will You Obey?—The teacher can ask students to name at home some of the places they will go during the week. After reminding the students that they can obey God in any of those places, the teacher asks students to tell their parents or siblings how they can obey God at the place they mentioned.

DOCK 2
• WELCOME
  • Option 1: Float—Students can do the activity if an orange, bowl, and water are available at home.
  • Option 2: Life Jacket Relay—In the livestreamed lesson, the teacher can show life jackets and display how to put them on, if desired, while omitting the section about a relay race.
• EXPLORE THE BIBLE!
  • Students can still pretend to be in a storm as described.
  • The whole family can have fun creating a “big fish.” They would drape blankets or sheets over a table in the dining room or the backs of chairs in the living room to make a tent shape, leaving an opening through which they can see the livestream. Then any family members who desire can pretend to be inside the fish. (They could also dim the lights.)
DISCOVER!
- Option 1: Flashlight Review—On the livestream, the teacher can quickly show a picture from the visual book and then hide it. At home, students say what that picture is about.
- Option 2: Follow-Up News Story—A student (or a student and a sibling) could sit behind a table and pretend to be a news anchor. Instead of asking questions like a reporter, the “news anchor(s)” tell the headline news about Jonah and the fish. Parents and other siblings are the audience.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY
- Option 2: Rescue Ring Hop—Families could print the Rescue Rings at home. Students step from ring to ring instead of hopping if desired, since they’re in the house. Optional: Students can arrange as many pieces of paper on the floor as there are words in the verse. Pieces should be several feet apart like stepping-stones. Students step to each piece of paper instead of hopping as they say each word of the verse. The paper stepping-stones should be far enough apart so the student must stretch to reach them!

APPLY IT NOW!
- Option 1: Talk to God—Encourage students to talk to God at home or anywhere. If they made a big fish out of blankets for Explore the Bible, they can pray inside the fish, like Jonah did.
- Option 2: Thanking Our Rescuers—Together families could make thank-you cards for their local first responders and send them to the appropriate places.

DOCK 3
WELCOME
- Option 1: Sea Lion Balancing Act—On the livestream the teacher can show the images of sea lions from the Director Resource CD Set.
- Option 2: Obstacle Course Together—Using large pillows, chairs, toy hoops, etc., families can make a simple obstacle course in any large area in the house.

INTRODUCTION
- Invite the sailor or fisherman to participate in the livestream and share about life on a boat and/or other experiences on the water, as described in the teacher book. If a sailor or fisherman is not available, the teacher could also locate information about deep sea fishing and share it during the introduction.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE!
- Students can still walk in place as if they’re walking toward Nineveh.
- Omit the portions about burlap bags. Optional: You could include small pieces (about 2”) of burlap in the at-home kits for students to handle during the lesson.

DISCOVER!
- Pass It On—If desired, include a balloon in each take-home kit. With an adult’s help, students will inflate the balloon and write “God loves you” on it. Instead of passing the message to other people, the student can keep the message as a reminder of the lesson.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY
- Option 1: Playful Seals—With a sibling or a parent, a student can sit on the floor and roll a ball back and forth, saying a word of the verse with each roll.

APPLY IT NOW!
- Option 1: Spread His Mercy—Students can use their own action figures or dolls to act out the scenarios.
- Option 2: Beach Ball Fun—Teachers could still use a Good News beach ball on the livestream, or they could also substitute a wordless book.
DOCK 4

• WELCOME
  • Option 2: Mini Tide Pool—Students can use their own Play-Doh to make a pretend tide pool as they learn what is in a tide pool from the activity. They would simply omit any of the other items they don’t have. If desired, include a small can of Play-Doh in each at-home kit. (It may be useful for other Primary activities as well.)
  • Option 3: Second Chances—Instead of tossing a Ping-Pong ball back and forth, a student can keep tossing any small ball gently in the air and catching it—until he or she drops the ball as described in the teacher book. Then the student gets a “second chance” and can pick up the ball and start tossing again.

• INTRODUCTION
  • The teacher can still list things that are important to kids in their area. Students decide which ones are most important to them.

• EXPLORE THE BIBLE!
  • Even at home, students can pretend to be Jonah in the booth, as described in the lesson, and pantomime his actions.

• DISCOVER!
  • Option 1: Puzzle Race—The teacher can encourage students who have a puzzle at home to put it together later and remember how Jonah did not see the whole picture, like we don’t when we only have a few pieces of a puzzle put together.
  • Option 2: Beach Ball Review—The teacher can use a Good News beach ball or Wordless Book to briefly review the gospel, instead of having students practice with each other.

• SCRIPTURE MEMORY
  • Option 2: Follow Your Captain—On the livestream, the teacher can say each phrase of Romans 12:21, and students echo that phrase as they watch.

DOCK 5

• WELCOME
  • Option 1: The Lighthouse—On the livestream, demonstrate possible lighthouse flashing patterns with a flashlight. Invite each student to move to an appropriate light switch in the room and flick it on and off to make their own light patterns. Optional: Students could also use a flashlight.

• EXPLORE THE BIBLE!
  • Even though students can’t be heard by the teacher, they can still repeat after the teacher each statement that ends with “Jesus loves me.”
  • For the activity when students role-play going to the tomb, families could set up the blankets and/or sheets as they may have done for their “big fish” in lesson 2. Then they pretend they are Jesus’ friends going to the tomb and looking inside.

• DISCOVER!
  • Option 1: Go and Tell—With the help of an adult, students can inflate a balloon and let it go after counting to three. If desired, include in the at-home kit a balloon for this activity.

• SCRIPTURE MEMORY
  • Option 1: The Lighthouse—Students can turn off the light in the room for the first half of the verse as they say it along with the teacher and turn it on for the second half of the verse. After becoming familiar with the verse, the students can repeat the activity on their own. Optional: The lights could be turned off in the room, and students could use a flashlight.
• **APPLY IT NOW!**
  • **Option 1: Tell Everyone!**—With the help of an adult family member, students cut out a heart shape from paper and write “Jesus Loves You” on the heart. Then they practice telling a family member “Jesus loves you” while giving them the heart. *Optional:* Before VBS, volunteers can make craft foam hearts with “Jesus Loves You” written on each heart and include one in each at-home kit.
  • **Option 2: Be the Lighthouse**—Omit the portions about a flashlight and students walking around the circle. Instead, the teacher can play the music CD loudly enough to be heard over the livestream. Each time the teacher stops the music at random, students think of one way they can show God’s mercy.
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Selected Activities and Modifications

**DOCK 1**

- **WELCOME**
  - Option 1: Safe Voyage—Families can play this game together but omit the obstacle course. They would play it like “Simon Says,” while using the words “Captain Says.”
  - Small group for Option 1: Safe Voyage—The activity can be played as written, but set up the obstacle course outside, using lawn chairs, cones, Hula Hoops, etc.
  - Option 2: True North—Show the picture of the Big and Little Dippers from the Big Fish Bay Director Resource CD Set or make the teaching image available for families.

- **INTRODUCTION**
  - Students sit in a chair. In the livestream, the teacher calls out the directional terms, and the student leans in the direction the teacher calls out.

- **EXPLORE THE BIBLE!**
  - Be sure the map from the lesson visual poster set or other map as described in the Materials list is visible beside or behind the teacher during the livestream.
  - With a helper, the teacher could do the skit with a faux smartphone on the livestream. If a helper isn’t available or the video setting doesn’t allow for a skit, the teacher can hold up a smartphone and explain how it would feel if someone were to break it, and describe the choice the teacher would face if the person asked for forgiveness.

- **DISCOVER!**
  - Option 2: What Stuck with You?—If the livestream will allow comments, students could comment about what stuck with them from the lesson.

- **SCRIPTURE MEMORY**
  - Option 2: Color Coded—Students can do this activity at home, using any kind of paper, not just index cards.

- **APPLY IT NOW!**
  - Option 2: Compassion by Compass—This printable compass picture could be made available to families from the Big Fish Bay Director Resource CD Set. *Optional:* Students can draw a compass instead of using the printed compass, then complete the rest of the activity.

**DOCK 2**

- **WELCOME**
  - Option 1: Fish in Water—If the supplies are available to a family, they could gather them, and students can do this exciting science experiment at home.
  - Option 2: Thanking Our Rescuers—Families can make thank-you cards for their local first responders and send them to the appropriate places.

- **INTRODUCTION**
  - During the livestream, the teacher can still do the illustration by him- or herself instead of with volunteers. The teacher would first put on the life jacket, without fastening it for sake of time. Then he or she would take off the life jacket and put on the arm floats.

- **EXPLORE THE BIBLE**
  - The teacher can still ask what some of the sights, smells, and feelings Jonah had inside the big fish. If commenting is available on the livestream, students can comment. If not, they can still respond at home.
• For the first-person Jonah, there are several options: (1) “Jonah” could still enter and take the teacher’s place on the livestream; (2) the teacher could dress in a simple Bible-times costume and be Jonah; or (3) the teacher can omit the Jonah first-person character and substitute a traditional third-person lesson delivery.

• **SCRIPTURE MEMORY**
  • Option 1: Rescue Ring Hop—Families could print the Rescue Rings at home. Students step from ring to ring instead of hopping if desired, since they're in the house. *Optional:* Students can arrange as many pieces of paper on the floor as there are words in the verse. Pieces should be several feet apart like stepping-stones. Students step to each piece of paper instead of hopping as they say each word of the verse. The paper stepping-stones should be far enough apart so the student must stretch to reach them!
  • Option 2: The Lighthouse—Students can easily do this at home with colored pencils or crayons and blank paper. Since some students may not have a Bible at home, consider providing a list of verses about the gospel that they could write on their lighthouse.

**DOCK 3**

• **WELCOME**
  • Option 1: Flowing Love—If the supplies are available to a family, they could gather them, and students can try this experiment at home.
  • Option 2: Lifeboat Rocket Races—Students could collect the supplies and try this experiment at home. *Optional:* Consider providing a small bag with a piece of string, balloon, and a section of a drinking straw in the at-home kit. All students would need is tape; the marker is optional. Instead of competing, the student just sees how far their lifeboat rocket flies on the string.
  • You might provide both Option 1 and Option 2 and let families choose, since a family may have more supplies for one than the other.

• **INTRODUCTION**
  • If a video cannot be played on the livestream, the teacher can collect pictures of ships and show them while discussing how ships have developed in design. Possible kinds of ships include Egyptian ships, triremes, Viking ships, caravels and carracks, clipper ships, steamships, and ocean liners.

• **EXPLORE THE BIBLE!**
  • Instead of students turning and sharing the first thing they would do if they had been thrown up on a beach, the students can comment on the livestream if that is an option, or simply tell a family member.
  • Instead of a volunteer, the teacher can call out like Jonah, “In forty days, Nineveh will be overthrown!”
  • Omit the burlap. *Optional:* Include a 2" piece of burlap in each at-home kit.

• **DECISION TIME**
  • Instead of students raising their hands if they would like the teacher to pray that God would help them share His mercy and tell people about Jesus, students can use whatever means the class has set up for communicating with the teacher (email, comments over the livestream, phone, etc.) to ask the teacher for prayer. Consider setting up a simple and easy code for the request, such as the word “Pray.”
• DISCOVER!
  • Nineveh Statues—Create an online picture board! Students choose a scene from the lesson to reenact and become like statues. A family member takes a photo, and then the students send the photo to the teacher. Consider sharing the pictures on a closed VBS group or other appropriate site.

• SCRIPTURE MEMORY
  • Option 2: Megaphones of Mercy—The printable megaphone could be made available to families from the Big Fish Bay Director Resource CD Set. Optional: Students simply design their own megaphone on paper and write out the memory verse and reference on the megaphone.

• APPLY IT NOW!
  • Option 1: Lifeguard—The teacher can list several excuses that a lifeguard might make for not rescuing someone, starting with the list in the book. Students can add other excuses a lifeguard might make by commenting on the livestream or by telling them to a family member. The teacher can then make the application to sharing the gospel, as suggested in the teacher book.
  • Option 2: Mercy Matters—The teacher could write out a few scenarios and read them out loud during the livestream, then guide the discussion while inviting students to comment as to the correct response. (Omit the role play.)

DOCK 4

• WELCOME
  • Option 1: Optical Illusions—Show the optical illusions from the Big Fish Bay Director Resource CD Set during the Welcome section and discuss as described in the book.
  • Option 2: Straw Wind Races—Consider including a disposable drinking straw and several cotton balls in each at-home kit. Invite students to mark a line with a piece of tape or other object on a table, and then to time how long it takes to blow all their cotton balls across the line.

• INTRODUCTION
  • Omitting the volunteers, the teacher could demonstrate the optical illusion by him or herself on the livestream.

• EXPLORE THE BIBLE!
  • Omit the volunteer pretending to be Jonah; the teacher can simply ask the class to imagine their feelings if their favorite team is playing for the championship, but they are in the other team’s hometown at the time.
  • Instead of the activity with two student volunteers and fish crackers, consider placing a cup on the same table used for the introduction. The teacher drops fish crackers one at a time from several feet up. For the first few crackers, the teacher covers his or her eyes, then opens them for the next few crackers. The application is that it’s easier when someone can see clearly, as Jonah needed to “see” clearly and view the Ninevites the way God saw them.

• DECISION TIME
  • The teacher could still use a Good News beach ball, demonstrating the “wordless” gospel presentation instead of groups passing the beach ball around a circle. Other wordless gospel tools can also be used, such as a Good News bracelet or a wordless book. (Could your church include a Good News bracelet in each Middler at-home kit so each student has a reminder of the gospel?)
• DISCOVER!
  • Option 2: Seeing Things God's Way—The spyglass from the Big Fish Bay Director Resource CD Set could be made available to families. **Optional:** Students draw their own spyglass and write on it God's ways of seeing and treating Nineveh.

• SCRIPTURE MEMORY
  • Crab Walk Review—Instead of the relay, students can crab-walk at home while saying the verse.

• APPLY IT NOW!
  • Sail Patchwork—Before class, the teacher can place the large piece of white fabric or paper with holes on the wall behind him or her. During the livestream, students comment with ways to live out God's desires for us. For each comment, the teacher places a “patch” (a piece of colored paper) over each hole on the sail.

**DOCK 5**

• WELCOME
  • Option 1: Lighthouse Challenge—The class could have a contest for constructing the best lighthouse at home. Students use interlocking plastic blocks, as described in the book, or any available material. Then they take a photo and send it to the teacher. **Tip:** Tell the students about this challenge the day before so they have time to collect materials.
  • Option 3: Dependable Knots—Provide the illustrations for tying knots to families from the Big Fish Bay Director Resource CD Set. Before class, the teacher should practice tying knots from the illustrations provided, and then demonstrate the procedure during the livestream and invite students to practice. Consider including a short piece of rope in the at-home kit, or students could simply use an available piece of rope at home.

• INTRODUCTION
  • The teacher can use the illustration on the livestream by trying to transfer water from the large bucket to an empty bucket on camera.

• EXPLORE THE BIBLE
  • Conduct the livestream where a whiteboard can be seen or place a large white poster board on the wall. Draw a large heart on the whiteboard or poster board. The rest of the illustration proceeds according to the directions in the book, but instead of volunteers, the teacher reads the sins listed in the heart, writes “= DEATH” beside the heart, tries to cover the sins with plastic bandages, and finally covers the heart with the red heart and replaces the word “DEATH” with “EVERLASTING LIFE.”

• SCRIPTURE MEMORY
  • Option 2: Memory by Lighthouse—Invite students to write the verse out on a piece of paper, then cut out each word of the verse. After mixing up the pieces of paper on a table so they are scrambled, students find out how fast they can arrange the verse in order on the table.

• APPLY IT NOW!
  • Option 1: Living Lighthouses—The teacher could explain the gospel during the livestream using an eFold.
  • Option 2: Compassion Charades—Invite families to play charades together. Each family member acts out ways to show God's love and compassion, while the other family members guess the action.
Suggested Lighthouse Point Modifications
for Junior

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Selected Activities and Modifications

DOCK 1

• WELCOME
  • Option 1: True Direction—If the supplies are available to a family, they could gather them, and students can try this experiment at home.
  • If desired, the Simon Says–style activity from the introduction could also be used as part of the welcome time; then the teacher would transition directly into the lesson.

• INTRODUCTION
  • This Simon Says–style activity can be done as explained in the book; the teacher gives the instructions on the livestream as students do the actions at home.

• EXPLORE THE BIBLE!
  • When student interaction is indicated, students can comment on the livestream if that option is available.
  • Instead of students throwing foam and box “cargo” overboard, an option is a livestreamed skit. The teacher and a couple of helpers become sailors in a storm and throw a stash of boxes and soft foam objects in every direction (except the camera). Ham it up and be as overdramatic as possible!

• DISCOVER!
  • Option 1: Want to Get Away?—Using their own paper and any available writing utensils, students design a travel brochure to Tarshish or Nineveh. If desired, students take photos of their brochures and share them with the class.
  • Option 2: Sailor Interview—If using an online meeting platform for the class, students can take turns “interviewing” each other. The rest of the class is the audience.

• SCRIPTURE MEMORY
  • Option 1: Color Coded—Students can do this activity at home, using any kind of paper, not just index cards.

• APPLY IT NOW!
  • Following God’s Direction—The teacher could write out a few scenarios and read them out loud during the livestream, then guide the discussion while inviting students to comment as to the right response. If desired, students could write out their own scenarios and send them to the teacher, who reads them to the class.

DOCK 2

• WELCOME
  • Option 2: Amazing Water Rescue—If capabilities allow for it, a video clip might be shown during the livestream.
  • Option 3: Rescue Occupations—The lifeguard, former lifeguard, rescue service member, or someone involved in a water rescue talks about his or her experiences on the livestream, as described in the book. If none of these people are available, the teacher could simply share a story he or she has discovered about a water rescue.

• INTRODUCTION
  • Invite students to look around them in the place where they’re watching the livestream. Ask if they see any of the common items that are named or if any of those items are in the house. On the livestream, the teacher and/or helpers demonstrate how each item might be used as explained in the teacher book.
• **EXPLORE THE BIBLE!**
  - The teacher can still ask for one word that describes the sights, smells, and feelings Jonah had inside the big fish. Students can reply by commenting on the livestream if that capability is available, or they could just tell a family member.
  - For the first-person Jonah, there are several options: (1) “Jonah” could still enter and take the teacher’s place on the livestream; (2) the teacher could dress in a simple Bible-times costume and be Jonah; or (3) the teacher can omit the Jonah character and substitute the traditional third-person lesson delivery.

• **DISCOVER!**
  - Option 1: Joppa Podcast—The teacher or another volunteer dresses up as Jonah. Students interview “Jonah” by commenting on the livestream or by asking the questions directly if the class is held on an online meeting platform.
  - Option 2: Life Ring Toss—Before class, the teacher attaches white poster board to the wall, or conduct the livestream where a whiteboard can be seen. Play tic-tac-toe as described but omit tossing the rings. Teams answer questions as described in the best commenting format for the livestream. If they answer correctly, they choose the next tic-tac-toe move.

• **SCRIPTURE MEMORY**
  - Option 2: Megaphones of Mercy—The printable megaphone could be made available to families from the Big Fish Bay Director Resource CD Set. *Optional:* Students could simply design their own megaphone on paper and write out the memory verse and reference on the megaphone.

• **APPLY IT NOW!**
  - Option 1: Rescue Logs—Consider including small notebooks or sailors’ logs in the at-home kit for this activity.
  - Option 2: ACTS—The teacher encourages students to write out the acronym “ACTS” vertically on a sheet of paper, then says each word and explains the meaning as students fill out the paper. If desired, students decorate their papers. They can also keep them handy to help as they pray throughout the week.

**DOCK 3**

• **WELCOME**
  - Option 1: Buoyant Boats—if the supplies are available to a family, they could gather them and do this activity as a “Fun at Home” activity outside of VBS. They would either do the activity as teams, or the entire family could build one boat together and find out how long it lasts before it takes on water.
  - Option 2: Seaside Sounds—the teacher plays the sounds on the livestream and asks students to identify the sound. After a pause of a few seconds, the teacher gives the answer.

• **INTRODUCTION**
  - Before class, the teacher places several upside-down containers on a table. The containers must have sides that cannot be seen through. Under one of the containers, the teacher hides an object. Students try to guess what container the object is under. The rest of the introduction continues as written with a slight modification: “What made you decide the container you chose?” The teacher then reveals the correct container.

• **EXPLORE THE BIBLE!**
  - A helper can still be “Jonah” on the livestream and walk around, in and out of the students’ line of sight, shouting, “You only have forty days! Nineveh’s going to be destroyed.”
  - Omit the burlap, but if desired, you could include 2” pieces of burlap in students’ at-home kits.
• DECISION TIME
  • The teacher can still explain the gospel using an eFold on the livestream.

• DISCOVER!
  • Option 1: Nineveh Statues—Create an online picture board! Students choose a scene from the lesson to reenact and become like statues. A family member takes a photo, then each student sends the photo to the teacher. Consider sharing the pictures on a closed VBS group or other appropriate site.

• SCRIPTURE MEMORY
  • Lifeboat Rescue—Students use any available “people” such as gummy bears, oyster crackers, or small candies. They “rescue” the people by moving them from one container to another with two toothpicks or a spoon, saying one word of the verse for each “person” rescued.

• APPLY IT NOW!
  • Option 1: Compassion Outreach—Decide on an appropriate compassion project as described in the book, then encourage families to collect items for the project together. At the end of VBS, families can either drop off the items at the church or ask for someone to pick them up.
  • Option 2: Lifeguard—The teacher can list several excuses a lifeguard might make for not rescuing someone, starting with the list in the book. Students can add other excuses a lifeguard might make by commenting on the livestream if that option is available, or by telling them to a family member. The teacher can then make the application to sharing the gospel, as suggested in the teacher book.

DOCK 4
• WELCOME
  • Option 2: Minute Seaside Games—Together, families do any of the minute games for which they have materials.

• INTRODUCTION
  • Omit the students moving to the sides of the room. The teacher can still ask the “would you rather” questions to get students thinking about things they desire.

• EXPLORE THE BIBLE!
  • An adult worker could still read the words that God spoke to Jonah in chapter 4 from off camera.
  • When the instructions call for students to share with each other, students can comment on the livestream if that option is available, or they could also tell a family member.

• SCRIPTURE MEMORY
  • Option 1: Memory Vine—Students draw a simple vine on paper. Optional: Include a picture of a vine in the at-home kit. Then students cut small pieces of paper and write one word of the memory verse on each piece. After mixing up the pieces of paper, students assemble the verse in order on the vine.
  • As another option, students could do a crab-walk review and recite the verse as they crab-walk.

• APPLY IT NOW!
  • Option 1: God’s Way—Students do the activity as described, using their own paper and pencils.
• Option 2: Sail Patchwork—Before class, the teacher can place the large piece of white fabric or paper with holes behind him or her on the wall. During the livestream, students comment with ways to live out God’s desires for us. For each comment, the teacher places a “patch” (a piece of colored paper) over each hole on the sail.

**DOCK 5**

• **WELCOME**
  • Option 1: Light in the Dark—If desired, include a small glowstick in the at-home kits for a “Fun at Home” activity.
  • Option 2: Lighthouse Challenge—The class could have a contest for constructing the best lighthouse at home. Students use interlocking plastic blocks as described in the book or any available material. Then they take a photo and send it to the teacher. *Tip:* Tell the students about this challenge the day before so they have time to collect materials.

• **INTRODUCTION**
  • Show the lighthouse model, pictures, or video clip on the livestream.

• **EXPLORE THE BIBLE!**
  • Omit dimming the lights, but students could be encouraged to dim the lights at home to simulate darkness.
  • Omit the pantomime of the tomb, or some theatrically inclined helpers could perform the pantomime on the livestream as the teacher is speaking.

• **DECISION TIME**
  • The teacher could still use a Good News beach ball, demonstrating the “wordless” gospel presentation instead of forming groups as described. Other wordless gospel tools can also be used, such as a Good News bracelet or a wordless book.

• **DISCOVER!**
  • Option 1: What Stuck with You?—Students draw a lighthouse using their own paper and writing utensils, and then write down memorable things from the lesson on their lighthouse.

• **SCRIPTURE MEMORY**
  • Option 1: Lighthouse Tower—Before class, volunteers could write words to the memory verse on a set of index cards as described, and then place one set of cards in each students’ at-home kit. On the livestream, the teacher demonstrates how to build one level. Students have one minute to build their lighthouses. When the minute is up, they disassemble their lighthouses, arrange the words on the cards in the correct order, and read the verse in unison.
  • Option 2: Sing It—Students could write their own short song that explains the verse and includes the verse as the chorus. If desired, the students could send their songs to the teacher.

• **APPLY IT NOW!**
  • Option 1: Compassion Charades—Invite families to play charades together. Each family member acts out ways to show God’s love and compassion while the other family members guess the action.
Financing Your Voyage

Many churches have felt the impact of COVID-19 in the area of their budgets, which has at times trickled down to VBS. If that’s the case for your VBS program, there are still excellent options for financing VBS. If people know about a need, they may be willing to give above and beyond their tithe in order to reach children for the Lord through VBS. (Talk about a stimulus!) Posting lists of needed supplies and asking for donations are other ways of providing opportunities for people to serve the Lord through their resources. With your VBS team and church’s pastoral leadership, brainstorm ways for fundraising that will work in your context. God is well able to provide all that is needed!
Permissions

These permissions are in effect June 1—October 1, 2020; are limited to the scope of your ministry’s modified VBS program; and are valid only for a ministry that has purchased and is in possession of the Big Fish Bay materials in question.

Using Big Fish Bay Worship DVD Videos

Powerful music is one of the most exciting parts of VBS. And Big Fish Bay has exciting new worship videos that students can enjoy in many settings, even if VBS isn’t held in a physical church building. The songs will get them excited about VBS and draw their hearts toward Jesus and His love.

If the format of your VBS will require the videos to be used remotely, you may livestream all RBP-owned and public domain videos for this year (2020), provided the videos are accessible only during the livestream. No videos may be uploaded to any online platform. If you do wish to upload the livestream of an event like Assembly Time, we ask that you first remove the music videos. These are the videos from the Worship DVD that you may livestream under this permission:

- “Big Fish Bay”
- “Let’s Go to the Bay”
- “Plenty of Mercy and Grace (Slow to Anger)”
- “Poor Jonah”
- “Peace Like a River”
- “Glory to His Name”
- “I Have Decided to Follow Jesus”
- “The Best Place”

Please do not use the videos in any other way than what is described above, as they are licensed to our customers for church or personal use only.

Using the Big Fish Bay Director Resource CD Set

You may share specific teaching resources from the Director Resource CD Set, without editing, to those participating in your modified VBS. Files must be deleted after October 1, 2020. This means that you may provide individual resources to those within your VBS. This does not allow for placing the content of the CD(s) in their entirety or majority onto a shared drive—local, cloud, or otherwise. If multiple complete copies of the content of the CD(s) are required, you may purchase additional copies at RBPstore.org.
Using the Teacher Book

You have limited permission to copy and share resources from the teacher book lessons (e.g., activities such as the Welcome, Explore the Bible, and Apply It Now sections). These resources may be distributed only within the scope of your ministry’s modified VBS program and must be deleted after October 1, 2020.

You may not scan, copy, or otherwise replicate the student activity sheets. Please purchase enough copies for each child participating. Per our return policy, churches may return eligible student activity sheets prior to September 15, 2020.

FAQs

Q. Will RBP release a new theme for 2021?

A. Yes. While 2020 has already been an extraordinary year, we fully expect to see extraordinary things God has in store for VBS 2021. We have been hard at work on the next theme and are excited about announcing it in conjunction with the 2020 GARBC Conference at the end of June. Make sure you’re on our email list to get the announcement!

Q. Will RBP support Big Fish Bay in 2021?

A. Big Fish Bay is all about God’s mercy, and our world most definitely needs God’s mercy today! Each year our team spends much time prayerfully considering a message and theme that’s important for that VBS year. RBP will continue to support the VBS 2020 theme (as supplies last) through September 15, 2020.

We understand that not every church can host a traditional, small group, at-home, or virtual VBS this summer or fall. We respect the authority of each local church to make a decision that is best for its situation. If your church is planning to use Big Fish Bay in 2021, we strongly recommend purchasing all resources no later than September 1, 2020. As you may know, some of our products are very popular and sell out quickly. You’ll want to order those now so you don’t miss out on those great resources! On a practical level, RBP does not have the warehouse capacity to carry two full years of VBS products. Additionally, some products that we bulk source from wholesalers are only available for a limited time, and we cannot guarantee their availability for the long term.

We look forward to serving you during this season—even if it’s for the next season!
What shape will Big Fish Bay take for your church?

The answer could be as exciting as the ocean setting of Big Fish Bay, and as personal as a stroll with friends along the boardwalk! Big Fish Bay can be unique to your church, and you can be confident that God has special and eternal plans for students who will be affected by VBS. Whether VBS this summer is bigger or smaller than you are used to, the results will be forever. Things may be different—but our loving and powerful God remains the same. We can commit all our plans to Him (Proverbs 16:3), knowing that He can do amazing things.

As the situation continues to develop, we’re all in this together. We at RBP are committed to the success of your VBS. You’ll find a great community of VBS leaders on Facebook who are glad to pray for you and share ideas. Children and families in your church will look forward to a one-of-a-kind VBS adventure this summer!

Whether VBS this summer is bigger or smaller than you are used to, the results will be forever. Things may be different—but our loving and powerful God remains the same. We can commit all our plans to Him, knowing that He can do amazing things.