

Holiday Lesson Series

New Year's Day

Bible Verse:

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

Why We Celebrate This Holiday:

New Year's has been celebrated around the world for many years. It got its start during the Roman times when it was actually celebrated in March, at the beginning of the spring season. In the 1500s, it was common to celebrate the New Year on Christmas when the birth of Christ is traditionally celebrated. January 1st became common in the 1700s. Now, people all over celebrate January 1 as New Year's Day. This day marks a day of remembrance for the previous year and a look at what is to come in the New Year.

Lesson Ideas:

1. Have children reflect on the previous year. Talk about what they did and what they might do differently in the coming year. Make a list of resolutions. Point out that New Year's Day is a day when God gives them a fresh start.
2. New Year's is a good time to learn about the calendar, counting and telling time. Set up a calendar for the year in your class and let the children help you mark important dates, such as holidays and their birthdays.
3. Talk about telling time. Show the children the difference between a clock with hands and a digital clock.

Decorations:

1. Hang a large New Year's banner in your classroom. Take each child's picture and attach it to the banner. Let them sign their name on the banner, too. This is a great way to keep up with how the children change in the coming months.
2. No New Year's celebration would be complete without streamers, Let your students decorate the classroom.
3. Balloons-You can purchase helium balloons for a couple of dollars at your local party supply store. Pick up a few to decorate and then the kids can take them home.

Craft:

Make a New Year's Day noisemaker to ring in the New Year. Collect toilet paper or paper towel tubes. Help the kids cover and decorate the outside. Tape a construction paper to the bottom and fill with anything that will make noise, such as dried beans or rice. Cover the other end.

Snacks:

1. Ham and black eyed peas are often served on New Year's Day to bring a person prosperity in the New Year. Some of your children may have never even tried black eyed peas. You can make some at home, or buy canned peas for the kids to try. Serve deli ham rolled up for easy serving and eating.
2. Donuts: In some countries, donuts are served to resemble a new start and prosperity. Donuts with a hole in the middle represent "coming to a full circle", or the ending and starting of a new year.

Game:**Race the Clock**

One child is the clock, the other children are mice. Have the “clock” stand with his or her back to the other children. The “mice” will stand at the opposite end of the room. The clock will say a time, such as “three o'clock”. The mice will take three steps, however, the clock may turn around to face the mice at anytime and if any of the mice are still taking his or her steps, they must go back to the start. The mouse that reaches the clock first becomes the new clock.

Gift Idea:

Make your children “poppers” or “firecrackers”. Cover an empty roll of toilet paper with tissue paper. Tie off at one end. Fill the tube with candy, confetti and small toys, such as plastic rings, tattoos or bouncy balls. Tie off the other end. The children can pull both ends to open the popper.