

## Memorial Day

Bible Point: We remember people who died for us.

### **DID YOU KNOW...**

The very first Memorial Day was on May 30, 1868. People placed flowers on the graves of Union and Confederate soldiers during the first national celebration. General James Garfield made a speech at Arlington National Cemetery, after which 5,000 participants decorated the graves of more than 20,000 Union and Confederate soldiers buried there.

### **DID YOU KNOW...**

On the Thursday before Memorial Day, soldiers from the 3rd U.S. Infantry (The Old Guard) place small American flags at each of the more than 260,000 gravestones at Arlington National Cemetery. They patrol the cemetery 24 hours a day during the weekend to ensure that each flag remains standing.

**Red poppies** are recognized as the Memorial Day flower, inspired by a World War I era John McCrae poem, "In Flanders Fields."



Read: Psalm 35:27; Deuteronomy 4:9; Joshua 4:18; John 15:13; Luke 22:19

Key Verse: "But give great joy to those who came to my defense. Let them continually say, 'Great is the Lord, who delights in blessing his servant with peace!' " (Psalm 35:27).

Bible Point: We remember people who died for us.

**Snack:** Supplies: Bible, large pretzel rods, whipped cream topping or frosting, red and blue sprinkles or m&m's, paper plates

**Lesson:**

**Say:** This week, we're celebrating Memorial Day. Memorial Day is a day  **WE REMEMBER PEOPLE WHO'VE DIED FOR US**, especially those who died while they were fighting in a battle.

**Ask:**

**Tell about someone you know who is or was in the military.** It's okay if kids don't have ideas. Share your own, or briefly share about a military figure in history.

Read Psalm 35:27. **Say: That means we want to celebrate those who've fought in battle to keep us safe and happy. That's what Memorial Day is for. Sometimes people use sparklers to celebrate Memorial Day. Let's make pretzel sparklers to remind us of the people who fought to keep our country safe.** Help the kids sprinkle their pretzels with the red and blue sugars.

**Say: I'm going to pray for our snack. When I pause, you can say the name of someone who fights for our country so we can thank God for that person and all he or she has done to protect us.**

**Pray: Dear God, we thank you for keeping our country safe. And we thank you for the people who've fought to keep our country safe. Some have even died while trying to keep us safe. We thank you for (pause to let kids fill in names). And we thank Jesus that he died for us, too. In Jesus' name, amen.** Allow time for kids to enjoy their snacks.

## Find the Colors of the Flag

**Easy Prep:** Place at least 1 red, 1 white, and 1 blue item around the room for each child.

### What You'll Do

Invite kids to tell what colors are on the United States flag. **Say: The colors on our flag are red, white, and blue. Our flag reminds us to be proud of where we live, and it can also help us as WE REMEMBER PEOPLE WHO'VE DIED FOR US.** Check that kids can identify the three colors. **Say: On "go," you'll search around our room for red, white, and blue things. Find only one of each color and bring it back to the center of the room. Ready? Go!**

Help preschoolers if they're struggling to identify the right colors. Remind them to pick only one object of each color. After all the kids have found one of each color, invite them to show their three objects.

### Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion...

**Tell about somewhere you saw a United States flag. What does the United States flag remind you of?**

**Say: The flag is a good reminder to us to celebrate our country. And on Memorial Day, we wave the flag as a way to celebrate people who have kept our country safe.** Invite children to wave their three colored objects in the air.

**Say: Listen to this.** Read aloud Deuteronomy 4:9. **Say: This part of the Bible is reminding us to follow God's ways. It was and is important for God's friends to follow God's important rules because they help us have the best life and they keep us safe. Like that, Memorial Day is a time for us to remember those who've fought and died for our country.  WE REMEMBER PEOPLE WHO'VE DIED FOR US and celebrate all they've done for us.**

## BIBLE EXPLORATION

### What You'll Do

Say: **On Memorial Day, we remember people who've worked hard to protect our country. And we remember the people who died protecting our country. These people sacrificed their lives. Sacrifice means to give up something important. They gave up their lives to protect us.**

Say: **Think silently about someone who made a sacrifice, or gave something for you.** Share a few examples to help preschoolers with ideas. You might share about a friend letting you have the last piece of candy or a sibling letting you play with his favorite toy.

Pass out stones to each child.

Say: **In the Bible, people sometimes used a pile of stones to remember something special. In Joshua 4, God helped his friends get across a big river. To remember what God did for them, God's friends made a pile of 12 stones by the river. Let's remember the sacrifices you thought of just now in the same way. When you have an idea to share, you can come up and set your stone on the tarp as you share your idea.** Some kids may not be able or willing to talk aloud. If that's the case, share ideas for them and help them place their stones in the pile. If you have toddlers, do it this way instead of having kids share.

After kids have all set their stones on the tarp, read John 15:13. **Say: There's one sacrifice that Jesus said was the greatest of all—giving up your life for someone else. These rocks help us REMEMBER PEOPLE WHO'VE DIED FOR US, who made a great sacrifice to keep our country safe. These rocks also helps us remember that Jesus died for us. Can you think of another symbol that represents Jesus dying for us? That's right, the cross!**

Although many have died to serve our country and keep us safe, Jesus is the only one who rose from the dead and defeated sin and death so we could live forever with Him! Let's thank Him for that now!

**Craft: Make an American flag! Use whatever supplies you have on hand to create the American flag.**

												