

# 1. Mary's Story (Luke 1:26-38)

The angel said, "Don't be afraid! Look! I bring good news to you—wonderful, joyous news for all people." (Luke 2:10)

## PLAN

### Session Outline

#### 1. Gather

Greeting  
Mary's Story  
Angel Messages  
Transition to Explore

#### 2. Explore

Sacred Conversation  
Hear and See the Bible Story  
Interact with the Bible Story  
Say the Bible Verse  
Transition to Respond

#### 3. Respond

Mary's Feelings  
Mary's Rose  
Loving God,  
Loving Neighbor  
Transition to Bless

#### 4. Bless

Inviting  
Praising  
Blessing  
At Home with God

### Supplies

**Basic Supplies:** CD player | DVD player | Projector or screen | Television | Craft glue | Crayons | Markers | Offering basket | Paper | Pencils | Scissors | Tape

**Gather:** Bell | Carpet squares

**Explore:** Bell

**Respond:** Bell | Candle | Carpet squares | Envelope | Multipurpose lighter

**Bless:** Envelope

### Before You Teach

"Don't be afraid." The New Testament contains five accounts of angels saying these words (Matthew 28:5, 10; Luke 1:13, 30; Luke 2:10). The frequency with which angels spoke the reassuring phrase, "Do not be afraid," makes one wonder why it was necessary! Were angels terrifying to behold, such that their appearance required reassurance? Or did the appearance of an angel usually signify such an important pronouncement, and possibly a life-altering event, that their presence automatically elicited a response of fear? For Mary, her encounter with the angel Gabriel certainly qualified as a life-changing event. Life as she knew it was about to change dramatically. Had she known how much, she might have been even more afraid.

Mary was a young girl, probably 12 or 13 years old—the age at which girls were married during biblical times. Mary was not a queen or a princess, but simply a young girl engaged to be married to a carpenter. Mary lived in a small town, Nazareth in Galilee, which is never mentioned in the Old Testament. She was an ordinary girl in an insignificant town until the angel's visit.

The angel told Mary she had found favor with God. Many assume those who are blessed by God will enjoy wealth and good health. Mary's blessing, however, was that she was to have a child out of wedlock. Mary's response of "How can this be?" seemed appropriate and believable. The angel assured her it was true, and that the baby was God's Son. God was at work among ordinary people. He chose to send Jesus as a message of God's love in an unexpected and unconventional way.

During Advent we prepare to once again celebrate God's unconventional message of love. Sometimes in the busyness of the season, it is possible to become overwhelmed. Take a moment to slow down and say a prayer of thanks to God. Give thanks for the message of love sent long ago and the many messages of love God continues to send us, sometimes in unexpected ways.



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## GATHER

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### Greeting

*Before class: Display your choice of attendance chart (Class Kit—pp. 16-17 or pp. 18 & 15).*

- Play "All Are Welcome" and "Come to Us, Emmanuel" (Annual Music CD).
  - Welcome and greet each child as he or she enters the room.
  - Indicate location of the offering basket.
  - Help children mark their attendance inside the building on the Community Attendance Chart (opt.).
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### A—Mary's Story (Activity Sheet)

*Before class: Obtain Activity Sheets (Session 1).*

- Distribute "Hard Things"/"Christ Is Coming" (pp. 3-4).
  - Encourage the children to follow the journaling prompt and complete the activities.
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OR

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### B—Angel Messages (Drama)

*Before class: Cut paper strips, one per child (four strips per page, approximately 8½" x 2¾").*

- Distribute the paper strips.

**ASK:** If you were a messenger of God, such as the angel, what would you want to say to someone?

- Direct the children to write or draw their answers.
- Let the volunteers act out their responses. The other children can guess what is being portrayed.

**SAY:** In today's Bible story, an angel delivered an important message.

**TIP:** *Make available costumes for children to dress as angels.*

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### Transition to Explore

*Before class: Obtain bell and carpet squares.*

- Ring the bell to acknowledge that it is time to transition.
- Direct the children to choose carpet squares (or equivalent items), then sit in a circle on the floor.

**TIP:** *Use Transitions as tools to help children easily move from one activity to the next.*

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## EXPLORE

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### Sacred Conversation

- Ask a few wondering questions.

**ASK:** I wonder:

- What made you laugh this week?
  - How did you help someone this week?
  - What are you grateful for?
  - Was there a difficult part of your week, and what made it better?
  - Where did you see God this week?
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### Hear and See the Bible Story

*Before class: Prepare television and DVD player.*

- Read the Bible story (*CEB Deep Blue Kids Bible—Luke 1:26-38*). (Verse 34 says, "sexual relations.")
- Watch the Deep Blue Adventure DVD Session 1.

**ASK:** How does your church get ready for Christmas?

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### Interact with the Bible Story

*Before class: Obtain Bible Story Sheets (Session 1).*

- Distribute the Bible Story Sheets and draw attention to Bible Story Retelling (p. 1).
  - Assign the role of Mary, then present "Mary's Story."
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### Say the Bible Verse

*Before class: Display Poster: Unit 1 Bible Verse (Class Kit—pp. 10 & 23). Review Unit 1 sign language (Leader Guide—p. 91).*

- Recite the Bible verse, "The angel said, 'Don't be afraid! Look! I bring good news to you—wonderful, joyous news for all people'" (Luke 2:10).
  - Invite the children to say and sign the Bible verse with you.
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### Transition to Respond

*Before class: Obtain bell.*

- Ring the bell, then invite the children to put away their carpet squares.

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## RESPOND

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### A—Mary's Feelings (Art)

- Distribute paper and invite the children to draw a face on each side of the paper.

**SAY:** When the angel first visited Mary, she was confused and afraid. But after the angel shared the good news, she was joyful and praised God.

- Encourage the children to depict Mary's emotions on each side. The first side would show Mary being confused and afraid, and the second side would show Mary being joyful.

**ASK:** How would you feel if an angel came to you?

- Invite willing volunteers to share.

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OR

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### B—Mary's Rose (Art)

*Before class: Photocopy "Mary's Rose" (Leader Guide—p. 12), one per child.*

**SAY:** Today we will make chrismons. Today's chrismon is a flower that represents Mary in the Bible story. We often see chrismons hanging on Christmas trees at church.

- Distribute the photocopies of "Mary's Rose." Invite the children to decorate and assemble.

**SAY:** You can hang your chrismon ornament on your Christmas tree at home.

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## Loving God, Loving Neighbor

*Before class: Obtain Map 6: Deep Blue Shores (Class Kit—p. 8) and Figures/Pieces: Deep Blue Shores Map 6 (Class Kit—p. 25). Cut out figures. Display Poster: Advent Wreath (Class Kit—p. 31). Obtain Poster Pieces: Advent Wreath (Class Kit—p. 29). Cut out poster pieces and store in an envelope.*

- Display the Deep Blue Shores Map 6 on the floor or table. While the children interact with the map and figures, talk about Advent.

**SAY:** Advent is a time of waiting and preparing for Jesus. Each week we will add a word label to our Advent Wreath poster. This week the word is "Hope."

**ASK:** What does *hope* mean to you?

- Display the poster pieces.
  - Invite a child to attach the #1 "Hope" poster piece to the poster's #1 candle.
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## Transition to Bless

*Before class: Obtain bell, candle, multipurpose lighter (or battery-operated candle), carpet squares.*

- Ring the bell to signal transition.
- Direct the children to each choose a carpet square, then sit in a circle on the floor.



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## BLESS

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### Inviting

*Before class: Continue to display Poster: Unit 1 Bible Verse (Class Kit—pp. 10 & 23) where it is easily accessible for children. Obtain Poster Pieces: Unit 1 Bible Verse (Class Kit—p. 22). Cut out poster pieces and store in an envelope.*

- Gather the children around the Bible-verse poster.
- Display the poster pieces.
- Invite a child to attach to the poster the "Mary" poster piece.

**PRAY:** Thank you, God, for bringing good news to all people. Amen.

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### Praising

*Before class: Obtain CD player and Deep Blue Song Sheets (new, located in Bible Story Sheets).*

- Distribute the song sheets for "Come to Us, Emmanuel" (Annual Music CD).
  - Sing the song "Come to Us, Emmanuel" (Annual Music CD).
  - Sign the Bible verse (Leader Guide—p. 91).
  - Collect the song sheets and store until the next session.
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### Blessing

**SAY:** In today's Bible story, Mary sang a song to praise God for the gift of Jesus.

**ASK:** How do you praise God?

- Invite the children to repeat after you Luke 1:46-47:

"With all my heart I glorify the Lord!

In the depths of who I am

I rejoice in God my savior."

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### At Home with God

**ASK:** What is one thing that you learned today? Can you share with your family what you learned?

- Send home with each child Bible Story Sheets—Session 1 leaflet.

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## Mary's Rose

