

3. Jesus Is Coming (Luke 2:1-5)

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
Jesus Is Coming
Caroling
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

On the Journey
Map It
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 | Christmas carol photocopies

Explore: Bell

Respond: Bell | Candle | Carpet squares | Maps | Multipurpose lighter

Bless: No additional supplies

Before You Teach

Each year during the Christmas season, we journey to Bethlehem—not literally, of course. Few of us could afford the time or expense to travel to Bethlehem once a year. However, in order to meaningfully celebrate Christmas, we place ourselves in the story each year, reading the familiar words that lead us to Bethlehem.

Bethlehem is where Jesus’ birth took place. In a small town that was relatively unimportant at the time, God’s Son was born—born to a young couple from Nazareth. Joseph and Mary journeyed to Bethlehem in response to a decree from Caesar Augustus. At the time of Jesus’ birth, Caesar Augustus was the most powerful person in the world, a world dominated by the Roman Empire. Therefore, when Emperor Augustus decided everyone needed to travel to their hometowns to be registered, that was what happened. It didn’t matter if this required a journey of over 60 miles at a time long before this was a one-hour trip in an automobile. And it didn’t matter if the woman to whom you were engaged was about to have a baby. Emperor Augustus decreed the entire empire would be registered so they could be made to pay taxes.

As we hear the story of Jesus’ birth, we are reminded that many years ago in this small, ordinary town, God did something extraordinary. A baby was born, God’s Son, who would be a peaceful ruler and change the world forever. As you prepare for this week’s lesson, take some time to stop and consider Jesus’ presence in your life. In the midst of Christmas preparations and celebrations, remember that the reason we celebrate is because Jesus, God’s Son, was sent to remind us that God is with us.

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GATHER

Greeting

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

- Play “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—Jesus Is Coming (Activity Sheet)

Before class: Obtain Activity Sheets (Session 3).

- Distribute “Where Would You Go?”/“Travel Time” (pp. 7-8).
 - Encourage the children to follow the journaling prompt and complete the activities.
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OR

B—Caroling (Music/Movement)

Before class: Print the lyrics of Christmas carols with which the students are likely to be familiar.

- Distribute the carol lyrics.

SAY: Christmas caroling is a way of proclaiming the Christmas message through song. Let’s share the Christmas message with others around the church.

- Take the class around your church setting singing Christmas carols. Suggestions include: sing carols to another Sunday-school class, to the church choir director/music minister, on the front steps of the church building, to babies in the nursery, in the parking lot, and down the sanctuary aisles.
 - When you return to your Sunday-school space, let the children share about their experience.
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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.



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EXPLORE

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 together (*CEB Deep Blue Kids Bible—Luke 2:1-5*).
- Watch the Deep Blue Adventure DVD Session 3.

ASK: What’s your favorite Christmas carol?

Interact with the Bible Story

Before class: Obtain Bible Story Sheets (Session 3).

- Distribute the Bible Story Sheets and draw attention to Bible Story Retelling (p. 1).
 - Assign the three parts, then present “Jesus Is Coming.”
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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

A—On the Journey (Game)

Before class: Photocopy “On the Journey” (Leader Guide—p. 24). Cut out pieces, then hide them.

SAY: Mary and Joseph went on a long journey to enroll on the tax list.

ASK: What might they have seen on their journey?

- Invite children to look for the items around the room. Tell them there are five items. When all five items have been found, direct the children to sit in a circle on the floor.

ASK: What else do you think Mary and Joseph might have seen on their journey?

OR

B—Map It (Logical)

Before class: Gather biblical maps, current maps, and atlases.

- Display maps.

SAY: In today’s Bible story, Mary and Joseph traveled to Bethlehem to be enrolled on a tax list. The emperor, Caesar Augustus, wanted to count all the people. Mary and Joseph began their journey in Nazareth and traveled to Bethlehem. Try to find those places on the map.

- Let children interact with the maps. Use current maps for children to look for places they might like to visit or places they have traveled. Let them guess how far away other cities might be.

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). Display Poster: Advent Wreath (Class Kit—p. 31). Obtain Poster Pieces: Advent Wreath (Class Kit—p. 29).

- 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 “Joy.”

ASK: What does *joy* feel like?

- Display poster pieces. Invite a child to attach the #3 “Joy” poster piece to the poster’s #3 candle.

Transition to Bless

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

- Ring the bell to acknowledge that it is time to transition.
- Direct the children to each choose a carpet square, then sit in a circle on the floor.



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BLESS

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).

- Gather the children around the Bible-verse poster.
- Display the poster pieces.
- Invite a child to attach to the poster the “Angel” poster piece.

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

Praising

Before class: Obtain CD player and Deep Blue Song Sheets.

- Distribute the song sheets of “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

- 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.”

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 3 leaflet.

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On the Journey

