



## ***Lesson Ideas: Birth of Jesus***

### **Preschool Bible Activity: Our Gifts**

Show children an empty manger. Say: A **manger is a food dish for cows. But for baby Jesus, it was a bed. Jesus was kind when he came to earth.**

Have kids each place some straw in the manger as they tell about a time they were kind to someone. Afterward, place a small doll in the manger.

Paraphrase the story from Luke 2:1-20.

### **Preschool Craft: My Manger**

Give each child:

- an envelope with the flap cut off,
- Play-Doh,
- a shredded-wheat biscuit,
- and a small gingerbread cookie cutter.

Help them each cut out a Play-Doh figure. Give kids crayons to color their envelopes. Fold and tape each lower envelope corner so it lies flat on the bottom fold of the envelope. This will enable the envelope to stand up as a "manger." Give children each a shredded-wheat biscuit to break up into their manger for straw. Have children place their figure on top of their straw.

### **Early Elementary Bible Activity: Add-On Verse**

Form seven groups. Give each group a different slip of paper with a statement written on it. Groups can have more than one statement. Have groups read aloud the #7 statement and add the #6 statement. Then repeat #7 and #6 and add #5. Continue until all statements are read.

The statements:

1. "the mother, blessed of God;"
2. "the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes by;"
3. "the gentle shepherds who went to see;"
4. "the heavenly chorus sang glad tidings to;"
5. "the new star which brightly shone when;"
6. "the kings of royal lines who followed;"
7. "we believe the witness of."

## Early Elementary Craft: Christmas Puppet Glove

Have kids each glue a pompom (or a cotton ball) to the top of each glove finger (or construction paper bands). Kids can use felt to create simple costumes for the characters from the Christmas story. Have children use their finger puppets to tell the Christmas story.

## Middle Elementary Bible Activity: Waiting Game

As kids arrive, tell them you have a special surprise for them, but it's not here yet. Keep building up the surprise for at least five minutes as kids wait. Finally, have someone bring in refreshments. Then ask: **How did you feel as you waited? Was it easy or difficult to wait? Explain. Was the wait worth it? Why or why not?**

Read aloud [Luke 2:1-20](#). Then ask:

- **How do you think the people who had waited for Jesus felt when he was born?**
  - **Was their wait worth it? Why or why not?**
- Do we have to wait for Jesus today? Why or why not?**

## Middle Elementary Craft: Spackled Wrapping Paper

Have kids cut out construction paper symbols such as a scroll, star, manger, angel or shepherd's staff. Then have kids arrange the symbols on large pieces of butcher paper. Using two spray bottles-each filled with half water and half tempera paint-have kids spray the paper. Let it dry. Have kids remove the shapes and draw around the outlines with a metallic pen or sparkle paint to help the images stand out. Give each child a piece of the wrapping paper to take home.

## Preteen Bible Activity: Hear Ye

Form pairs. Give each pair parchment paper and pens. Have children read [Luke 2:1-20](#) and create birth announcements for Jesus.

Afterward, have kids show their announcements. Then \*ask: What's the most wonderful announcement you've ever heard? What did the announcement of Jesus' birth mean to people in those days? What does it mean to us today?

## Preteen Craft: Scroll

Have kids use glitter pens and markers to write brief announcements on parchment paper, such as "Joy! Jesus is Born!" Have kids roll the top and bottom edges to resemble a scroll and glue in place. Then have kids attach a piece of gold cord for a hanger and decorate it with bits of greenery.

## Food for Thought

You'll need:

- several apples or oranges (provided by the children),
- sliced fruit,
- and punch on hand.

Gather all your classes together and have children bring their unsliced fruit. Lay a sheet on the floor and use yarn to make a tree outline on the sheet. Have children work together to create a Christmas fruit tree within the outline.

Afterward, serve kids sliced fruit and punch. Take an aerial photo of kids with the tree and sing Christmas carols. Then have kids gather all the fruit and make fruit baskets for needy families.

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