



Advent 3: Jesus Is Born

Lesson Aim: To know Jesus was born in a manger in Bethlehem.

THE WORSHIP

Who God Is: The God Who Comes Near

THE WORD

Bible Story: Luke 2:1-7

What He Has Done: God gave us His Son, baby Jesus.

THE WAY - BIBLE MEMORY VERSE

"Glory to God in the highest!" Luke 2:14a

Unit 10: The God Who Comes Near			
	Bible Story	What He Has Done	Lesson Aim
48	Advent 1: Gabriel Visits Zechariah, Luke 1:11-22, 62-64	God sent His angel Gabriel to tell Zechariah the good news.	To know God gets believers ready for Christmas.
49	Advent 2: Gabriel and Mary, Luke 1:28-33	God sent His angel Gabriel to prepare Mary for the birth of Jesus.	To know the Lord is with us.
50	Advent 3: Jesus Is Born, Luke 2:1-7	God gave us His Son, baby Jesus.	To know Jesus was born in a manger in Bethlehem.
51	Advent 4: An Angel Visits the Shepherds, Luke 2:8-16	God sent an angel to announce the birth of Jesus to the shepherds.	To know God sent an angel to tell the shepherds about Jesus.
52	Following the Star, Matthew 2:1-2, 9-11	God sent a star.	To know the wise men followed a star.

TEACHER'S ENCOURAGEMENT

This week, read Philippians 2:5-11. Please join us in praying, "Thank You, Lord, for coming to earth as a baby so we can know You in a way that is familiar to us. Help the children understand You are always near them. Amen."

TEACHER'S TIP

What about Santa? Many cultures incorporate the story of Saint Nicholas (Santa Claus) into their family traditions at Christmas. However, not every family follows this tradition. To honor all parents, our role as Bible teachers is not to address (validate or invalidate) this tradition, but to redirect the children's focus to celebrating the gift of God's Son.



**THE WORSHIP
THE WORD &
THE WAY**

Segment	Minutes	Activity	Supplies
THE WELCOME	Up to 20	Treasure Chest	Treasure chest, stamp or sticker of baby Jesus
		Coloring Center: Happy Birthday, Jesus!	Coloring pages of Jesus' birth, crayons
		Play-Dough Center: Cows Go "Moo"	Play-dough, cookie cutters, play-dough tools
		Block and Car Center: A Trip to Bethlehem	Blocks, cars
		Dramatic Play Center: Born in a Manger	Baby doll, basket, items for a baby's care
		Nativity Center: Baby Jesus	Nativity set, Christmas music
		Preparing for Worship	None
THE WORSHIP	Up to 20	Worship Sheet music and recordings for Bible Memory Verse Songs are available at ResourceWell.org. An Advent Wreath is recommended for the four weeks of Advent. Four purple candles (traditional or battery-operated) are suggested, but use the colors familiar to you. You may choose to include a center Christ candle.	Praise music (you may choose to sing favorite Christmas praise songs), optional: musical instruments Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song: "I Bring You Good News" Other Bible Memory Verse Song Suggestions: "Give Thanks to the Lord" "His One and Only Son" "Praise Time: Love the Lord Your God" "Sing Praises" "The Lord Is Faithful" "We Love"
		Offering	Baskets
		Worship Illustration	<i>The Adventures of Delbert and Lello</i> puppet script or storybook: God of Wonders Unit 10, Lesson 50
THE WORD	Up to 10	Watch the Word: Luke 2:1-7	Teacher's Bible with bookmark at Luke 2:7 Visual: Picture of the Bible story, baby doll wrapped in a blanket
THE WAY	Up to 25	Craft: Baby Jesus Ornament	Baby Jesus template for Ages 2-3 (available at ResourceWell.org), sturdy white paper, light blue felt for swaddling cloth (may substitute paper or fabric), label, glue, crayons
		Game: Act It Out	See GAME for props.
		Game: Animal Walk	Christmas music
	Snack: Manger Munchies	Any fruit, sugar cubes, or granola (foods that donkeys might enjoy)	
	Final 5	Final Five	Ponder, Pray & Play: Unit 10 Lesson 50
GOT TIME?	Up to 10	Say & Do: Luke 2:1-7	None
	Up to 10	Game: Glory to God!	Ribbons or strips of cloth or crepe paper, Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song "I Bring You Good News"
	Up to 10	Game: Quiet Time	Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song "I Bring You Good News"
	Up to 10	Story Time	Any story about the birth of Jesus

RESOURCES: Supplemental materials are available at ResourceWell.org.



The God who comes near

THE WELCOME

Welcome each child as they arrive. **Hello _____.** **I am glad you are here! Come open the Treasure Chest to find today's treasure.** Child unlocks the Treasure Chest to receive a sticker or stamp of baby Jesus. **Let this stamp (or sticker) of baby Jesus remind you that Jesus was born in a manger.**

Teacher's Note: These activity centers are designed to reinforce the lesson through hands-on learning experiences either individually or in small groups with the guidance of the teacher. Choose the Bible Activity Centers that best suit the children in your class. Set up the activity centers around the room before children arrive. Allow children to move freely among them.

COLORING CENTER: HAPPY BIRTHDAY, JESUS!

SUPPLIES

Coloring pages of Jesus' birth, crayons

DO

Children color their pictures while talking about the story.

TALK ABOUT

Christmas is when we celebrate Jesus' birth. It's like a big birthday party for Jesus. How do you celebrate your birthday? (Children respond.)

PLAY-DOUGH CENTER: COWS GO "MOO"

SUPPLIES

Play-dough, cookie cutters, play-dough tools

DO

Children create animals with the play-dough while discussing today's lesson.

TALK ABOUT

What do we celebrate on Christmas? (Jesus' birth.) **Jesus was born in a stable. Do you know what a stable is?** (A place where animals are kept.) **What animals do you think were in the stable when Jesus was born?** (Children respond.) **Can you make some of those animals with the play-dough? What is your favorite animal?** (Children respond.)

BLOCK AND CAR CENTER: A TRIP TO BETHLEHEM

SUPPLIES

Blocks, cars

DO

Children play with the blocks and cars while talking about Mary and Joseph's trip to Bethlehem.

TALK ABOUT

Mary and Joseph had to travel a long way to get to the town of Bethlehem. Do you know what Mary rode on? (A donkey.) **Have you ever gone on a long trip?** (Children respond.) **Where did you go?** (Children respond.) **How did you get there?** (Children respond.)

THE WELCOME *continued ...*

DRAMATIC PLAY CENTER: BORN IN A MANGER

SUPPLIES

Baby doll, basket, baby blanket, items for a baby's care

DO

Children play while taking care of the baby.

TALK ABOUT

Where did baby Jesus sleep? (In a manger.) **A manger is a big box that holds the food for the stable animals. Mary and Joseph loved baby Jesus very much. What would Mary and Joseph have done to show baby Jesus they loved Him?** (Children respond.) **Do you know anyone who has a new baby?** (Children respond.) **How do they show love to their baby?** (Children respond.)

NATIVITY CENTER: BABY JESUS

SUPPLIES

Nativity set, Christmas music

DO

Children play with the nativity set. Have the children identify each of the figures in the nativity set. Play Christmas music while children play.

TALK ABOUT

At Christmas, we celebrate the birth of baby Jesus. The day Jesus was born was a wonderful day. Who were Jesus' parents? (Mary and Joseph.) **How did the shepherds know Jesus was born?** (The angels told them.) Ask other questions about Jesus' birth. Note: The wise men followed the star to Bethlehem, but they did not come until later when Jesus was about two-years-old.

PREPARE FOR WORSHIP

It's time for Praise Time. Let's sing a "Clean Up Song" as we put things away. Praise children as they help clean.

**Clean up! Clean up! Everybody, everywhere!
Clean up! Clean up! Everybody do your share!**

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE SIGN LANGUAGE

(For visual demonstrations, see www.signingsavvy.com.)

**"Glory
to God**

Hold palms together. Top hand moves upward as fingers make wiggling motion. (God) The open right hand, fingers together and palm facing left, moves upward and then down the center of the face with fingers facing up.

in the highest."

(highest) Held together, pointer and middle fingers point to the side and are raised in front of the body.

Luke 2:14a

Hold hands open, as if holding a Bible.

Adding sign language or motions to the Bible Memory Verse helps children recall what they are learning.



The God who comes near

THE WORSHIP

Supplies: Praise music (you may choose to sing favorite Christmas praise songs), optional: musical instruments, Advent wreath

Teacher Tip: To help children identify time set aside for worship, designate a special corner or area for singing, collecting offering, and watching the worship illustration. Play "Praise Time: Love the Lord Your God" as children move to that designated area.

Advent Wreath: An Advent Wreath is recommended for the four weeks of Advent. Four purple candles (traditional or battery-operated) are suggested, but use the candle colors familiar to you. You may choose to include a center Christ candle.

To prepare for the lighting of the Christmas candles, light the first two candles on the Advent wreath.



When Jesus was born, all of heaven and earth praised God. We can praise God through prayer right now. Have the children bow their heads and close their eyes. **Dear God, we praise You for who You are and all You have done for us. This Christmas season we remember how You sent Your Son, Jesus, to us as a baby. Amen.**



Sing: "Sing Praises." **God loves us so much that He sent Jesus to save the world. Let's sing while we give our offering.** Sing: "His One and Only Son" while collecting the offering.



The Lighting of the Christmas Candles: The Bethlehem Candle

We light the Christmas candles to get our hearts ready to celebrate Christmas. Last time, we lit the Angel's candle and Mary's candle. Today, we light our third candle, the Bethlehem candle. It reminds us that Jesus the Savior was born in Bethlehem. Choose a child to assist in lighting the third candle. The candle lighting takes place during the performance of *The Adventures of Delbert & Lello* puppet script or after reading the storybook version.



Before we light the candle, let's hear from Delbert and Lello. Perform *The Adventures of Delbert and Lello* puppet script or read storybook: God of Wonders Unit 10, Lesson 50. If you read the storybook, light the candle now.



The angels praised God when Jesus was born. "Glory to God in the highest!" they sang. Glory to God in the highest means we give our biggest and highest praise and thanks to God. Let's practice our Bible Memory Verse together. Practice with the motions.

"Glory	Hold palms together. Top hand moves upward as fingers make wiggling motion.
to God	(God) The open right hand, fingers together and palm facing left, moves upward and then down the center of the face with fingers facing up.
in the highest."	(highest) Held together, pointer and middle fingers point to the side and are raised in front of the body.
Luke 2:14a	Hold hands open, as if holding a Bible.



A savior is someone who saves people. Jesus is the called the Savior because He came to save the world. Sing: "I Bring You Good News." Children listen to the verses and sing along on the chorus: "Glory to God in the highest."



Jesus was born in a manger

THE WORD

Supplies: Teacher's Bible with bookmark at Luke 2:7, picture of the Bible story, baby doll wrapped in a blanket

Before we begin our Bible Time, let's say our Classroom Promise with the motions.

With my eyes on my teacher;	Point to eyes.
My mouth quiet as can be,	Place index finger over mouth as quiet sign.
I will listen to hear,	Cup hand around ear.
How God loves you and me.	Hug self, point to others, and then self.

Let's reach deep in our pockets and pull out our listening ears. Reach in your pocket and cup your hands behind your ears as if listening.

Hold the baby on your lap. **Shh! The baby is sleeping.** Once the children are quiet, continue in a whisper. **Baby Jesus was born in a stable, which is like a barn. Do you think it was quiet in the stable?** (No.)

Let's pretend we are the animals in the stable. Divide the class into three groups and assign each group an animal such as a cow, pig, or sheep. **On the count of three, I want you to make the noise your animal makes. 1-2-3-**Children make the animal sounds for a few moments. **Was that very quiet?** (No.) **Let's find out why baby Jesus was born in a stable.** Handle Bible as a special treasure, leaving it open to Luke 2:7.



WATCH THE WORD: LUKE 2:1-7

Read the story below or retell the passage in your own words. To illustrate the story, show a picture of the Bible story from a children's Bible, the coloring page, or other source.

- **Mary and Joseph traveled to Bethlehem town.**
- **They went there for it was Joseph's hometown.**
- **They arrived after traveling for a very long while.**
- **Soon it was time to have Mary's first child.**

- **He was born in a manger in Bethlehem;**
- **For there was no room for them in the inn.**
- **Mary wrapped baby Jesus in swaddling clothes,**
- **And lay Him in the manger—the place that God chose.**

To what city did Mary and Joseph travel? (Bethlehem.) **Where did Jesus' mother put Him when He was born?** (In a manger.)



God came near to us through baby Jesus

THE WAY

Teacher Tip: Craft and games can be presented at the same time in different areas or one at a time depending on class size and teaching style.

CRAFT: BABY JESUS ORNAMENT

Purpose: To know Jesus was born in a manger.

Supplies: Baby Jesus template for Ages 2-3 (available at ResourceWell.org), sturdy white paper, light blue felt for swaddling cloth (may substitute paper or fabric), label, glue, crayons

Prepare: Print and cut out the baby Jesus template and the label (“**A Savior has been born.**”) from sturdy white paper. Punch a hole in the top of the cut out. Cut out a piece of light blue fabric for swaddling cloth.

Adaptation for Ages 2-3: This craft has been adapted from the curriculum for ages 4-5.

Optional: Cut out baby Jesus and provide an oval of felt or fabric for children to glue the cutout onto for the ornament.

Directions:

1. Before or after the children decorate Mary, thread the yarn through the hole in the top of the ornament and tie the ends together for a hanger.
2. Color baby Jesus.
3. Glue the fabric onto the baby Jesus cut-out for swaddling cloth.

Craft Discussion:

- **Baby Jesus was laid in a stable manger. Who remembers what a manger is?** (Big box that holds food for the animals.)
- **How was baby Jesus’ first bed and first outfit different from most babies?** (He was wrapped in cloth instead of a baby blanket. He was laid in a manger instead of a crib or basket.)

THE WAY *continued...*

GAME: ACT IT OUT

Purpose: To remember the details of Jesus' birth by acting out the story.

Supplies: Jesus in a manger (baby doll wrapped in cloth in box with straw, hay, or shredded paper), stable (sheet or blanket), costumes for Mary, Joseph, and the Innkeeper (pillowcases with the sides cut open and a slit in the top for the head, bathrobes or shawls, strips of cloth or ropes for belts)

Let's imagine what it was like to be there when the Savior was born!

Directions:

1. Set-up
 - The Inn: Place two chairs with a space between for the inn.
 - The Stable: Lay a sheet on the floor for the stable. Set the manger (without Jesus) on the sheet. Keep baby Jesus separate.
 - Assign the roles of Innkeeper, Mary and Joseph. Distribute costumes, if available. The remaining children can be the stable animals: sheep, oxen, sheep dogs, cows, donkeys, etc.
 - The Innkeeper stands next to the door of the inn.
 - Mary and Joseph stand away from the inn and stable.
 - The animals sit on the sheet (the stable) around the manger.
2. Lead the children in retelling the story below (Luke 2:1-7) as they act it out.
 - **Mary and Joseph traveled to Bethlehem.** (Mary and Joseph walk slowly toward the inn.)
 - **When they arrived, they asked for a place to stay. But, the innkeeper told there was no room.** (Mary and Joseph ask if there is room. The Innkeeper tells them there is no room.)
 - **Finally, they found a stable. It didn't smell very good and the animals were noisy.** (Mary and Joseph walk to the stable. The animals make noise.)
 - **When Jesus was born, His mother, Mary, wrapped him in cloths and laid Him in the manger.** (Give baby Jesus to Mary. Mary wraps Him and places Him in the manger.)
 - **Jesus' birth was good news!**
3. As time allows, play again, switching roles among the children.

GAME: ANIMAL WALK

Purpose: To remember the animals that would have been in the stable.

Supplies: Christmas music

Jesus was born in a stable. Let's pretend to be some of the animals that may have been in the stable.

Directions:

1. Children follow behind you in a line.
2. Choose an animal such as a cow, pig, sheep, chicken, or donkey. **What sound does a name of animal make? When the music starts, let's walk around the room and pretend to be a name of animal. When the music stops, I want you to freeze. Don't move and don't make a sound.**
3. Have a helper play the music. Periodically stop the music and have the children freeze in place. Each time you restart the music, choose a different animal. You may choose the same animal more than once or allow the children to choose their own animals to act out.

THE WAY *continued...*

SNACK: MANGER MUNCHIES

Purpose: To remember Jesus' birth.

Snack Suggestion: Any fruit, sugar cubes, or granola (foods that donkeys might enjoy)

Directions:

1. Serve snack and drink.
2. **Let's sing the "Blessing Song."** Sing to the tune of "Frere Jacques" or another familiar tune.
**God our Father, God our Father. Once again, once again,
Thank You for our blessings. Thank You for our blessings. Amen. Amen.**
3. Lead discussion below while children enjoy their snack.
 - **Today, our snack reminds us of food a donkey would eat. Along with hay, this is the kind of food that would be in a manger. A manger is a box that holds the food for stable animals.**
 - **Do you have any pets?** (Children respond.) **What do your pets eat?** (Children respond.) **Do they eat from a bowl or from a manger?** (Children respond.)
 - **Joseph and Mary had a long journey to Bethlehem. Have you ever taken a long trip?** (Children respond.) **Where did you go?** (Children respond.) **Who went with you?** (Children respond.) **Where did you stay?** (Children respond.)
 - **How was your trip the same as Mary and Joseph's trip?** (Children respond.) **How was it different?** (Children respond.)



When only 5 minutes remain, begin this segment.

FINAL FIVE MINUTES

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE

Gather children in a circle sitting or standing and practice the words and motions.

"Glory to God in the highest." Luke 2:14a	Hold palms together. Top hand moves upward as fingers make wiggling motion. (God) The open right hand, fingers together and palm facing left, moves upward and then down the center of the face with fingers facing up. (highest) Held together, pointer and middle fingers point to the side and are raised in front of the body. Hold hands open, as if holding a Bible.
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PRAY

Let's pray together. Say a closing prayer with the children.

PLAY

Allow children to play with selected toys or centers or choose a book to read to them.

DISMISSAL

Have children take home their coloring page, craft, and a copy of the Ponder, Pray & Play for 2-3's.



If time remains, choose from the connected activities below.

GOT TIME?

SAY & DO: LUKE 2:1-7

Purpose: This pantomime version of the Bible Story helps children remember the story details.

Supplies: None

Directions: With each phrase, the teacher says the phrase and leads the children in doing the hand motions.

- **Mary and Joseph traveled to Bethlehem town.** (Walk in place.)
- **They went there for it was Joseph's hometown.** (Point as in stating a fact.)
- **They arrived after traveling for a very long while.** (Look at wrist watch.)
- **Soon it was time to have Mary's first child.** (Rub belly.)

- **He was born in a manger in Bethlehem,** (Rock baby in arms.)
- **For there was no room for them in the inn.** (Shake head no.)
- **Mary wrapped baby Jesus in swaddling clothes,** (Rock baby in arms.)
- **And lay Him in the manger—the place that God chose.** (Point to heaven.)



BIBLE MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITIES

"Glory to God in the highest!" Luke 2:14a

GAME: GLORY TO GOD!

Purpose: To help children memorize and review the Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse.

Supplies: Ribbons or strips of cloth or crepe paper, Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song "I Bring You Good News"

God sent an angel to the shepherds with good news. Do you know what that good news was? (Baby Jesus was born.) **The angel said, "Glory to God in the highest." Let's say that together, "Glory to God in the highest." Glory is the praise and thanks we give to God. As we sing, let's dance and wave these ribbons as a way to praise God for sending Jesus to us.**

Directions:

1. **Listen for the words, "Glory to God in the highest," and sing along.**
2. **Play the Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song "I Bring You Good News."**
3. **Lead the children in waving the ribbons as they dance about the room. Encourage them to sing along when they hear "Glory to God in the highest!"**

GOT TIME? *continued...*

GAME: QUIET TIME

Purpose: To take a moment of silence to think about God's goodness.

Supplies: Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song "I Bring You Good News"

Zechariah could not say a word for about 300 days. Since he was not talking, he had plenty of time to think about God and to listen. Let's take a minute to be quiet and hear what the angel said to the shepherds about baby Jesus.

Directions:

1. Invite children to get in a comfortable position either by laying their heads on a table or by resting on the floor.
2. **Listen for the words: "Glory to God in the highest." Glory is the praise and thanks we give to God. Glory to God in the highest means we give our biggest and highest praise and thanks to Him.**
3. **It is good to take time to be quiet and think about God. Let's be quiet and think about God while we listen to our Bible Memory Verse Song.** Play the Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song "I Bring You Good News." Children rest quietly as they listen.



STORY TIME

Gather the children and read a favorite story. This can be a Bible Story, a chapter from *The Adventures of Delbert & Lello*, or a story about the birth of Jesus.

PONDER, PRAY & PLAY

Unit 9, Lesson 50: Advent 3: Jesus Is Born

PONDER! To celebrate the coming of Jesus as a family, light candles on your Advent Wreath (a circle of greenery and four candles). This week, gather your family to light three candles. As you light candle number three, The Bethlehem Candle, read Luke 2:1-7. Ask your parent what it was like when you were born or when you first came home to your family.

PRAY! Pray this prayer each day this week: "Lord, thank You for coming near to everyone in Bethlehem. Thank You for leaving heaven and being born in a manger. Amen."

PLAY! Travel with your family around your neighborhood and sing "Away in a Manger" or another favorite Christmas carol. As you walk, imagine the journey Mary and Joseph took to Bethlehem.

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE

"Glory to God in the highest." Luke 2:14a	Hold palms together. Top hand moves upward as fingers make wiggling motion. (God) The open right hand, fingers together and palm facing left, moves upward and then down the center of the face with fingers facing up. (highest) Held together, pointer and middle fingers point to the side and are raised in front of the body. Hold hands open, as if holding a Bible.
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