2026-12-13 Christmas Series #3: The Birth of Jesus Christ

Introduction

In this lesson, children will hear the story of Jesus' birth from Luke 2:1-20. God was in charge of every detail. A ruler named Caesar Augustus ordered everyone to register in their family's hometown, so Joseph and Mary travelled to Bethlehem, the town of David. There, Jesus was born and laid in a manger because there was no guest room. God sent an angel to humble shepherds with good news: "Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord" (Luke 2:11). The shepherds hurried to see Jesus, told others, and went back "glorifying and praising God."

Christmas is full of lights, presents, parties, and programs. Those things can distract us from the most important part. The "star of the show" at Christmas is not Mary, the shepherds, or even the angels. It is Jesus! God sent His Son, the promised Savior, not as a king in a palace but as a baby in a manger. Jesus should be the centre of our Christmas and of our lives.

> **Teachers:** Keep the census simple: "The ruler wanted to count all the people, so everyone had to go to their family's town." The source lesson uses "star of the show" as a picture of who matters most. Luke 2 does not mention the star in the sky; the star leads the Magi in Matthew 2. If children ask, say: "The Bible tells us about a star later, when wise men came to find Jesus." Don't place the star over the stable in the story.

Before Class:

- Gather Nativity props: a shepherd's staff (or broom handle), a stuffed sheep or other animal, a white scarf (angel), a blue cloth (Mary), and a doll wrapped in a cloth (baby Jesus) in a box or basket "manger."
- Cut out one paper star per child for the craft, and prepare blue construction paper and craft sticks.
- Bookmark Luke 2:1-20 in your Bible.

Main Ideas:

- **God Was in Charge:** God used even a ruler's command to bring Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem, the town of David.
- **Jesus Came Humbly:** The King of all was born and laid in a manger.
- **Good News of Great Joy:** The angel told the shepherds that a Savior, the Messiah, the Lord, was born.
- **The Shepherds Responded:** They hurried to see Jesus, spread the word, and praised God.
- **Jesus Is the Star of Christmas:** Jesus, not presents or parties, is the centre of Christmas and of our lives.

Lesson Overview

Lesson Title	Christmas Series #3: The Birth of Jesus Christ
Service Date	December 13, 2026

Key Attribute of God	Faithful and generous (God sent His Son, as He promised)
Main Idea	God kept His promise and sent Jesus, the Savior, Messiah, and Lord; Jesus is the centre of Christmas.
Memory Verse	Luke 2:11 (NIV): "Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord."
Bible Passage	Luke 2:1-20
Age Group	Suggested for ages 4-6; adjust language and participation for your class.
Bible Story	10 minutes: Introduction (1), Storytelling (5), Wrap-up & Discussion (4)
Craft & Game	10 minutes: Craft (5), Game (5)
Source	Adapted from "The Birth of Jesus Christ" (Luke 2:1-20), written by Kristin Schmidt, © 2022 The Sunday School Store. Bible text: NIV.
Teacher Resources	Source PDF: physical pages 4-5 (Jesus at the centre), 6-7 (activities), 8-11 (Luke 2), 13 (star craft). Bible passage (NIV). The star craft is a reminder of Jesus as the centre of Christmas, not a claim that a star appears in Luke 2.

Praise and Worship (15 mins)

> **Parents:** The parent and child scheduled for this week will lead us in singing on Sunday. Please take time to practice the songs together at home, helping your child feel confident and joyful as they prepare to lead.

https://youtu.be/jKDPcu21N-k?feature=shared

https://youtu.be/ad6f0DwBkT0?feature=shared

Prayer and Offering (5 mins)

> **Parents:** Please encourage your children to bring an offering to church. You may help your child prepare by setting aside a coin for them to bring on Sunday. This is a great opportunity to teach them about giving to God with a thankful heart and trusting Him to provide.

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> ## What is Offering?
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> Offering is when we **give something to God** to show our love and thankfulness. In church, we often give money as an offering, but we can also give our time, talents, and kindness to God and others.

> ### Why Do We Make an Offering?
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> **To Thank God** – Everything we have comes from God! Giving back is a way to say, “Thank You, God!”
> **To Trust God** – When we give, we show that we trust God to take care of us.
> **To Help Others** – Offerings help the church teach about Jesus, help people in need, and share God’s love.
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> The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 9:7,
> *"God loves a cheerful giver!" That means God is happy when we give with a joyful heart!*

Prayer for Offering

> “ Dear God, thank You for giving us everything we need. We want to give back to You with joyful hearts. Please use our offering to help others and share Your love. Help us to always trust You. In Jesus’ name, Amen!

Review Verse from Last Week

(Review from the November 29 Christmas lesson. December 6 remains scheduled for Godly Play.)

Matthew 1:21 (NIV)

She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.

Bible Story (10 min)

Introduction (1 min)

Purpose: Help children discover who is the most important person in the Christmas story.

Props Needed:

- Nativity props: shepherd's staff, stuffed sheep, white scarf, blue cloth, wrapped doll in a "manger"

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> *(Hold up the props one at a time.)*
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> **Teacher:** "Hello, children of God! It's almost Christmas! Are you excited? What do you like about Christmas?" *(Take a few answers.)*
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> **Teacher:** "Have you ever been in a Christmas play? Look at what I have. Who uses this staff?" *(A shepherd!)* "Who wears this white scarf?" *(An angel!)* "Who is this blue cloth for?" *(Mary!)*

> **Teacher:** "In a Christmas play, who is the most important part? Who is the star of the show?" *(Let children guess, then lift the wrapped doll from the manger.)* "Jesus! Christmas is all about Jesus. Let's hear how He was born."

Story Telling (5 min)

Props / Visuals Suggested:

- Bible
- The Nativity props from the introduction; invite children to hold them as each character appears
- Optional: Luke 2:6-7 verse picture from the source PDF

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> ### Part 1: The Long Trip to Bethlehem (Luke 2:1-5) (1 min)
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> **Teacher:** "A ruler named Caesar Augustus wanted to count all the people. Everyone had to go to the town their family came from. Joseph belonged to King David's family, so he and Mary had to go to Bethlehem, the town of David."
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> **Teacher:** "It was a long journey. Let's pretend to travel by walking in place together." *(Children walk in place, slowly and tiredly. Luke does not say how Mary and Joseph travelled.)* "Joseph and Mary arrived in Bethlehem, the town of David. God was keeping His promise to send the Savior."
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> ### Part 2: Jesus Is Born (Luke 2:6-7) (1 min)
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> **Teacher:** "Bethlehem was very crowded. Mary and Joseph could not find a room." *(Children shake heads: "No room!")* "While they were there, the baby was born." *(Read Luke 2:7.)*
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> *"She gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them."*
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> *(Gently lay the wrapped doll in the manger. Children rock their arms like holding a baby.)*
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> **Teacher:** "A manger is a box where animals eat. If a king is born, where would you expect him to sleep?" *(A palace! A fancy bed!)* "But Jesus, the King of all, was laid in a manger. He came in a very humble way."
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> ### Part 3: Angels Bring Good News to the Shepherds (Luke 2:8-14) (1.5 mins)
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> *(Children with the staff and sheep sit to one side as shepherds.)*

Teacher: "That night, shepherds were outside in the fields, watching their sheep. Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared, and the glory of the Lord shone all around them! They were terrified!" *(Children cover their eyes, then peek.)*

Teacher: "But the angel said..." *(Read Luke 2:10-12.)*

"Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

Teacher: "Then suddenly a great crowd of angels appeared, praising God and saying..." *(Everyone raises hands.) "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests" (Luke 2:14).*

Teacher: "Remember two weeks ago? I told you more good news was coming. Here it is! God didn't announce Jesus' birth to kings first. He told simple shepherds."

Part 4: The Shepherds Hurry, Tell, and Praise (Luke 2:15-20) (1.5 mins)

Teacher: "The shepherds said, 'Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened.' So they hurried off!" *(Children run in place quickly.)* "They found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger, just as the angel said."

Teacher: "Then the shepherds told everyone what they had heard about this child, and all who heard were amazed." *(Children cup hands around their mouths.)* "But Mary treasured up all these things and thought about them in her heart." *(Children put hands over hearts.)*

Teacher: "The shepherds went back to their sheep glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen. Let's praise God like the shepherds: 'Praise God! Jesus is born!'"

Review with Actions

- **Teacher:** "Mary and Joseph went to Bethlehem." *(Walk in place.)*
- **Teacher:** "No room!" *(Shake heads.)*
- **Teacher:** "Jesus was laid in a manger." *(Rock the baby.)*
- **Teacher:** "The angel said, 'Do not be afraid!'" *(Peek out from covered eyes.)*
- **Teacher:** "Glory to God in the highest heaven!" *(Raise hands high.)*
- **Teacher:** "The shepherds hurried and told everyone." *(Run in place, then cup hands around mouth.)*
- **Teacher:** "Jesus is the star of Christmas!" *(Point to the manger.)*

Wrap-up & Discussion (4 min)

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(Gather the children close. Use the questions below selectively so there is time for the central teaching.)

Teacher: "In the Christmas story, Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, and the angels are all important. But who is the star of the story?" *(Jesus!)* "God sent His Son to rescue us from sin and death, just as He had promised long ago."

Teacher: "At Christmas we have lights, presents, parties, and programs. Those are fun, but sometimes they make us forget the most important thing. Jesus should be the star of our Christmas, and of every day."

Discussion Questions:

Question: "Why did Mary and Joseph go to Bethlehem?"

Teacher Key: The ruler ordered everyone to register in their family's town. Joseph was from David's family, so they went to Bethlehem, the town of David. God was in charge of it all.

Question: "Where was baby Jesus laid?"

Teacher Key: In a manger, because there was no guest room. The King came humbly.

Question: "What good news did the angel tell the shepherds?"

Teacher Key: "Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord."

Question: "What did the shepherds do after they saw Jesus?"

Teacher Key: They spread the word about Jesus and went back glorifying and praising God.

Question: "What is the most important part of Christmas?"

Teacher Key: Jesus, the Savior God sent to us.

Closing Thought & Prayer

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Teacher: "God kept His promise. In Bethlehem, the town of David, a Savior was born: Jesus, the Messiah, the Lord. He came as a baby in a manger, so humble, yet He is the King of all. Like the shepherds, let's praise God and tell others about Jesus. Jesus is the star of Christmas!"

(Fold hands and bow heads. Children repeat each line.)

> **Prayer:** "Dear God, thank You for the joy of Christmas and for sending Your Son to us. Please help us to focus on Him and keep Christ the star of our lives. Thank You for Your love. We love You, God! In Jesus' name, Amen!"

Memorizing Verse: Luke 2:11

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> **Luke 2:11 (NIV)**
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> Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.
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> **Hand Gestures:**
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> - **"Today"**: Point down at the floor ("right now!").
> - **"in the town of David"**: Make a roof shape over your head with both hands.
> - **"a Savior has been born to you;"**: Rock your arms like holding a baby, then point to a friend.
> - **"he is the Messiah,"**: Put an imaginary crown on your head (the promised King).
> - **"the Lord."**: Point both hands upward.
>
> **Teacher:** "Let's say the verse together, phrase by phrase, and do the actions. Now let's say the whole verse together. I will do the actions while you say the words."
>
> **Teacher Tip:** Explain briefly: "Savior" means the One who rescues us. "Messiah" means the promised King God said He would send. For younger children, teach the verse in two parts: "Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you" and "he is the Messiah, the Lord."

Craft & Game (10 mins)

Craft: Jesus Is the Star of the Story Scene

Adapted from the source lesson's "Star of Bethlehem Scene" craft. Children make a simple manger scene with a star that points to Jesus as the most important part of Christmas.

? **Time:** 5 minutes

? **Age Group:** 4-6 years

? **Lesson Connection:** Jesus is the centre of Christmas.

? Setup & Materials Needed:

- One sheet of blue construction paper per child

- Two craft sticks per child (to cross as the manger) and a small piece of white paper or a cupcake liner (the baby's cloths)
- One paper star per child (yellow or orange)
- Glue sticks, crayons, optional stickers
- Caption printed on the paper ahead of time: "Jesus is the star of the story!"

? How to Do It:

Step 1: Children glue two crossed craft sticks near the bottom of the page to make a manger.

Step 2: Glue a small piece of white paper on the manger and draw baby Jesus' face.

Step 3: Glue the star at the top of the page. Add drawings or stickers: sheep, shepherds, or angels.

Step 4: Teacher: "Who is the star of the story?" *(Jesus!)* "When you see your picture at home, remember that Christmas is all about Jesus."

Teachers: the star on the craft is a reminder that Jesus is the most important person. It is not part of the Luke 2 story.

Game: Who's in the Story? Freeze!

Adapted from the source lesson's "Who would you be in the story?" activity. Children act out characters and always end by pointing to Jesus.

? **Time:** 5 minutes

? **Age Group:** 4-6 years

? **Lesson Connection:** Everyone in the Christmas story points us to Jesus.

? Setup & Materials Needed:

- An open space
- The wrapped doll in the manger placed in the middle of the room
- Optional: Christmas music to play and pause

? How to Play:

Step 1: Teacher: "When the music plays, walk around. When it stops, I will call out someone from the Christmas story. Freeze in that pose!"

Step 2: Call out characters and poses:

- "Shepherds!" (hold a staff and look after the sheep)
- "Angels!" (arms raised, praising God)
- "Mary and Joseph travelling!" (walk slowly in place)
- "Sheep!" (crawl and say "baa")

Step 3: End every few rounds with "Who is the star?" Everyone turns and points to the manger and shouts, "Jesus!"

Step 4: Teacher: "Everyone in the story had a part, but they all pointed to Jesus. The shepherds praised God because of Him. We can too!"

Response Song

https://www.youtube.com/embed/HLjWuJrHvi4

Closing Prayer & Snack Time (10 mins)

> "Dear God, thank You for sending Jesus, our Savior, the Messiah, the Lord. Thank You that He came as a baby in a manger. Help us remember that Jesus is the most important part of Christmas, and help us praise You like the shepherds. In Jesus' name, Amen."
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> Now, let us thank You for the snack we're about to enjoy.
> We fold our hands.
> We bow our heads.
> We thank You, God,
> for this daily bread.
> Amen.

Free Time & Children Pickup (15 mins)

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