



DECEMBER THEME

**THE BIG GIVE**

Think Outside the Box

**BIBLE STORY**

Luke 2:1-18

Miracle from Heaven | Jesus is Born  
Spark Story Bible | 212-217 + 218-223  
Jesus is Born | Wise Men

**BOTTOM LINE**

God gave us Jesus

**MEMORY VERSE**

“Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share”  
1 Timothy 6:18, NIV

**LIFE APP**

Generosity | Making someone’s day by giving something away

**BASIC TRUTH**

I can trust God no matter what

**FOR LEADERS ONLY**

**GOD VIEW:** the connection between **GENEROSITY** and God’s character, as shown through God’s big story.

**Key Question: What does Christmas mean to you?** The Christmas story is one of the most familiar stories in the Bible—even if you didn’t grow up in church. At some point, kids need to decide for themselves if they believe it’s true; that Christmas is more than the presents and time with family. We pray this will be the Christmas many kids will see Jesus in a new way and decide to put their faith in him.

It’s Christmas! We head to the familiar story in **Luke 2:1-18**. While people expected a new king born in a palace, God had other plans in mind. Jesus was born in a place where they kept the animals. No royal robes, not much public fanfare, just Mary and Joseph cuddling Jesus for the first time. God announced God’s gift to shepherds, helping us realize that Jesus was a gift for everyone.

**Bottom Line: God gave us Jesus.** Kids and their families will get the chance to celebrate Jesus, God’s most generous gift. They’ll discover why God sent Jesus for us, and what that means for how they show generosity to the people in their life.

**SOCIAL: PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION**

Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Get ready to experience today’s story.

Before kids arrive, **PRAY** for each regular attendee by name. Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. Thank God for such a wonderful season of celebrating the Son God sent to us so many years ago. Praise God for seeing and meeting our need for a Savior. Pray that your time with your few today would be fun and celebratory!

**•• JUST FOR FUN**

*Made to Connect | An activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding*

**What You Need:** No supplies needed

**What You Do:**

- Ask: Would you rather have to loudly sing the chorus of “Jingle Bells” every time you walked into a room for a day or wear a bell necklace 24/7 for one week?
- Let kids discuss the answer to the question.
- Encourage them to ask each other why they chose the answers they did.

**•• GET YOUR HEAD IN THE GAME**

*Made to Play | An activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group*



**What You Need:** Butcher paper, scissors, tape, bows

**What You Do:**

- Divide the group into 2 teams.
- Give each team a large piece of butcher paper, scissors, tape, and a few bows.
- Teams select a teammate to be the “gift.”
- Teams compete to wrap their “gift,” using all the wrapping materials supplied.
- The team to most completely and/or imaginatively wrap their “gift” (*everything except for the face should be covered*) wins.

**What You Say:** “You did some excellent wrapping! It certainly isn’t easy wrapping a person, but you all did a great job! **[Transition]** Today in Sunday CM worship/WOW family worship, we’ll hear/we heard about a gift that didn’t look like a “typical” gift at all.”

[Sunday Leaders: Lead your group to the Family Room for Children’s Ministry Worship. Wednesday Leaders: Continue with the study.]

---

## GROUPS: CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible story applies to real life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

●● **TAKE A SNAPSHOT** [Live for God | Application Activity]

**Made to Reflect | An activity that creates space for personal understanding and application**

**What You Need:** Scrap paper, pens

**What You Do:**

- Set out scrap paper and pens.
- Ask kids to write a word they associate with Christmas on a scrap of paper.
- Challenge kids to see how many words they can think of in 30 seconds, one word per piece of paper.

**Pro Tip:** Participate in this activity as well. Make sure you write the word “anticipation” or “expectation.” Not only do we anticipate Christmas Day, but it will tie in with a later discussion about the shepherds anticipating the arrival of a Messiah.

- When time is up, have the kids lay out their words on the small group table working as a team to group together similar words.
- Discuss the words.
  - Are there a lot of duplicate or similar words? What are they? Why do you think those words were chosen by several people?
  - Were there any unique words? Discuss how the unique words could be associated with Christmas.
  - Be encouraging so no one feels singled out for the words they chose; there are no wrong words. Some words will simply need more explanation than others. (*Say things like, “I didn’t even think of that!” “Great point!” “Glad you wrote that down.”*)
  - What words are associated with family traditions or with celebrating Christmas?
  - Are there any words describing the feeling or emotions we associate with Christmas? (*This is an opportunity to discuss the excitement of Christmas: the anticipation of visiting with relatives, of giving and receiving gifts, of vacation from school or work, etc.*)
- You will revisit the words in the next activity; so leave them grouped together.

●● **BIBLE STORY EXTENSION** [Talk about God | Bible Story Review]

**Made to Imagine | An activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play and reenactment**

**What You Need:** Bibles, words used in the “Take a Snapshot” activity



**What You Do:**

- Review today's Bible story from Luke 2:1-18.
- Ask kids to get together in groups of 3 or 4 to retell the Bible story from the viewpoint of the shepherds.  
—Encourage kids to think not only about what physically happened in the story but what the shepherds might have been thinking and feeling.
- If kids are stuck or seem to be preparing a “surface level” retelling, you could ask a couple of the following questions:
  - You are keeping watch; what might you be doing?
  - What might you be doing to make sure your sheep are safe?
  - When the angel of the LORD appeared and you were terrified, what might you do or say?
  - Why would the birth of a Savior be good news of great joy?
  - After the shepherds saw Mary and Joseph and Jesus, what did they do?
- Give groups 8-10 minutes to plan and practice a retelling.
- After time is up, ask for a volunteer group to do their retelling.
- Set the scene by saying, “You are a shepherd out in the fields on the very first Christmas ever. ACTION!”
- Let groups take turns doing their retellings.
- Wrap up by asking a few questions about the story:  
—Imagine that your family has been anticipating a big event for generations. So you've grown up hearing about this event that'll happen some time in the future, and you know your parents heard about it from your grandparents and your grandparents heard about it from THEIR parents and grandparents. When it finally happened, what do you think that would feel like?  
—Can you give an example as to how the shepherds showed generosity? What did the shepherds give to others?
- Turn kids' attention to the words from the previous activity.
- Ask which words could also be used to describe the first Christmas from the shepherds' point of view. Which words would be used only by us today?

**•• DISCUSSION QUESTIONS** [Talk about God | Bible Story Review]

***Made to Connect | An activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding***

**What You Need:** No supplies needed

**What You Do:**

Ask some of the following questions...

- What are some things about Jesus' birth that may have been unexpected by Mary and Joseph?
- What about things that might have been unexpected by the shepherds?
- What was the shepherds' response to Jesus' birth? What should be our response to Jesus' birth?
- How would you explain Christmas to someone who had never heard of or celebrated it before? What would you tell him or her about your family traditions, gifts that are given and received, or the emotions you experience on and around that day?

**•• VERSES TO TAKE WITH YOU** [Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

***Made to Reflect | An activity that creates space for personal understanding and application***

**What You Need:** Bibles, copy paper, pens

**What You Do:**

- Read Luke 2:10 and ask:  
—What was the Good News?  
—What are other words you would use for “great joy”?  
—What brings you joy during the Christmas season?



- Are there activities or traditions you do every year that you would miss if you didn't do them? What are they?
- Emphasize that Jesus' birth is a time for celebration, a time for great joy and lots of fun.
  - Challenge kids to create a new Christmas tradition, using a combination of new ideas and existing traditions they currently do with their families each year.
  - Let kids break up into groups of 3 or 4.
  - Give them 3 minutes to quickly gather their ideas.
- They can use paper and pens to make notes or draw things out if they need to.
- Go around the group and let teams quickly share about the new tradition they came up with.
  - Then let the group vote on which tradition they would pitch to their families to try this year.

---

## PRAY AND SEND [Pray to God | Prayer Activity]

*Made to Reflect | An activity that creates space for personal understanding and application*

**What You Need:** "Ornament" cards, pens, tape

**What You Do:**

- Remind kids that we celebrate Christmas because God gave us Jesus, and we can trust God to continue to do amazing things.
  - Give each group member a blank ornament.
  - Ask them to write one way they will celebrate Jesus' birth.
- They can write a simplified version of the new tradition their team created in the "Verses" activity.
- They could write down a family tradition they're really looking forward to.
- They can write a tradition they're hoping to get their family to start doing this year.
- As they finish, tape the ornaments to the "giving wall."

**What You Say:** Dear God, we know we can trust you no matter what, and we have hope because you do amazing things even when we don't expect it. Thank you for the amazing birth of your Son, Jesus. It is because of Jesus we can be with you now and forever, and that is reason for great joy. We pray that our celebration of Jesus' birth shows others how important you are to us. Amen.

**What You Do:** Give each child a **GodTime** card. Sunday Leaders: Pass out **Parent Cue** cards to any adult who has not yet received one. Encourage kids to tell their parents this week's **[Bottom Line] God gave us Jesus!** as an answer to why we celebrate Christmas.