

SESSION 1

Angels Spoke to Mary and Joseph

BIBLE PASSAGE

Luke 1:26-38; Matthew 1:18-24

LIFE POINT

God planned for Jesus to be born.

CHRIST FOCUS

Angels told that Jesus would be born.

LEVEL OF BIBLICAL LEARNING

God sent Jesus to earth as a real person.

SUGGESTED USE DATE: December 1

BIBLE VERSE

Mary will have a son, and you will name Him Jesus.

Matthew 1:21 (*Paraphrase*)

She will give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus.

Matthew 1:21 (*CSB*)

And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS. Matthew 1:21 (*KJV*)

She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. Matthew 1:21 (*NIV*)

She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus.

Matthew 1:21 (*ESV*)

And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS. Matthew 1:21 (*NKJV*)

SCHEDULE AND PROPS

Huddle Ups (*Optional*)

(*time varies*)

Supplies (for each small group):

- “The Name Game”—sheet of paper (*1 per child*), sticky notes, marker
- “Angels Spoke to Mary and Joseph”—coloring supplies, coloring sheets
- “Do You Hear What I Hear?”—none

Countdown Video (*3 minutes*)

Props: none

Worship Song (*3 minutes*)

Props: none

Welcome and Prayer (*5 minutes*)

Props: none

Miss Lindy’s Library

(*3-5 minutes*)

Props: none

Connection Point Game

(*10 minutes*)

Props: small candy cane

Worship Song (*3 minutes*)

Props: candy cane (*reuse from Connection Point Game*)

Bible Story (*10 minutes*)

Props: Bible, December wall calendar, marker

Worship Song and Offering

(*3 minutes*)

Props: none

Connection Point Bible Verse

(*5-8 minutes*)

Props: none

Connection Point Missions

(*5-8 minutes*)

Props: none

Real Life Connections

(*3-5 minutes*)

Props: none

MUSIC AND MEDIA

- **Countdown:** *Countdown* video
- **Worship Song:** “God’s Gift of Love”
- **Welcome and Prayer:** *Life Point* and *Bible Verse* slides
- **Miss Lindy’s Library:** *Miss Lindy’s Library* video
- **Connection Point Game:** *Connection Point Game* slide
- **Worship Song:** “Come and Worship Him”
- **Bible Story:** *Bible Story* and *Christ Focus* slides; *Bible Story Time* video (*optional*)
- **Worship Song and Offering:** Worship song of your choice
- **Connection Point Bible Verse:** *Connection Point Bible Verse* and *Bible Verse* slides
- **Connection Point Missions:** *Connection Point Missions* slide; “Christmas in Kazakhstan” missions video
- **Real Life Connections:** *Real Life Connections* and *Life Point* slides

Huddle Ups (Optional)

Huddle ups are for churches that have a drop-off time before the session begins or a pick-up time as parents arrive at the end of the session. It's a great time for interaction with a small group leader through games, conversations, or review questions. Play the countdown video to signal the end of Huddle Ups and the beginning of the session.

- ➔ Estimated time: varies according to schedule
- ➔ Tech: none
- ➔ People: Small Group Leaders
- ➔ Supplies (*for each small group*):
 - “The Name Game”—sheet of paper (*1 per child*), sticky notes, marker
 - “Angels Spoke to Mary and Joseph”—coloring supplies, coloring sheets
 - “Do You Hear What I Hear?”—none

THE NAME GAME

Prep: Write a child's name on a sheet of paper. Space the letters so a sticky note can fit over each. Write each letter of the child's name on separate sticky notes. Repeat for each child in your group. Randomly stick the notes around the room.

- Give each child the paper containing his name.
- Invite kids to find sticky note letters that match the letters in their names.
- Help kids find the letters in their names and stick them to their papers.
- Gather the children. Allow each child to show his paper and tell his name.
- Mention that today kids will hear a very special name. Tell kids an angel told Mary to name her baby Jesus!
- If your time allows, play a game with the name cards. Call each of the following directions (*or use your own*) and lead kids to respond:
 - Hold your paper over your head and shout: “Jesus.”
 - Stand on your paper and shout your name.
 - Hold your paper in front of you and shout: “Jesus.”
 - Hold your paper behind you and shout your name.

ANGELS SPOKE TO MARY AND JOSEPH

Prep: Print a coloring sheet for each child.

- Tell preschoolers that angels said Jesus would be born.
- Distribute coloring supplies and coloring sheets to the preschoolers.
- Invite preschoolers to color on their pages while they wait for the session to begin.
- Suggest kids color on the backs of the pages if they prefer to use blank paper.

DO YOU HEAR WHAT I HEAR?

Prep: none

- Guide kids to stand in a circle.
- Lead kids to say today's Bible verse, Matthew 1:21.
- Remind kids that angels told Mary and Joseph very good news! Ask: “What did Mary and Joseph hear the angels say?” (*Mary would have a baby. Name the baby Jesus.*)
- Mention that Mary and Joseph listened to the angels and followed their directions.
- Challenge kids to play a listening game. Explain that you will whisper the instructions, and kids must listen carefully. Caution that you might tell the boys to do something and tell the girls to do something different.
- Whisper: “Do you hear what I hear?” Follow the question with a simple instruction such as: jump in place, touch your head, sit on the floor, shout your name, and so forth. Occasionally instruct the boys and the girls to perform different movements.
- Play as your time allows.
- Comment that Mary and Joseph heard very good news! God planned for Jesus to be born!
- Encourage kids to tell their families the good news Mary and Joseph heard.

COUNTDOWN VIDEO

- ➔ Estimated time: 3 minutes
- ➔ Tech: *Countdown Video*
- ➔ People: none
- ➔ Props: none

(Play countdown video to signal the beginning of worship time. Kids will count aloud as they join the large group.)

WORSHIP SONG

- ➔ Estimated time: 3 minutes
- ➔ Tech: Music video, mics for singers, lights *(optional)*
- ➔ Music: “God’s Gift of Love” *(lead sheet available on DVD-ROM)* or download a worship song of your choice
- ➔ People: Worship Leader and/or Worship Team
- ➔ Props: none

WORSHIP LEADER

Hi, everyone! Has someone ever given you a gift? Who gave it to you? *(Allow a few kids to respond.)*

It was very kind of your grandma *(friend, parents, or other people mentioned)* to give you a gift. Did you know that God gave you a gift, too? God gave people the very best gift of all. It isn’t a gift you can unwrap or set under a Christmas tree. God’s gift is Jesus! God sent His Son, Jesus, because He loves people very much.

Let’s learn a new song together about the best gift ever: Jesus!

(Show the music video. Kids stand to sing.)

WELCOME AND PRAYER

- ➔ Estimated time: 5 minutes
- ➔ Tech: *Life Point* and *Bible Verse* slides
- ➔ People: Bible Study Leader
- ➔ Props: none

BIBLE STUDY LEADER

I’m so happy to see you! I also was happy to hear you singing about Jesus. What is something that makes you happy? *(Allow kids to respond.)*

Oh, those things make me happy, too! Today we will hear about two people who heard very happy news. Our Bible verse tells us about the happy news. Listen as I say the verse, and then we will say it together.

(Show Bible Verse slide—select preferred version.)

(Say the Bible verse. Lead kids to repeat it after you.)

BIBLE VERSE (SELECT PREFERRED VERSION):

- Mary will have a son, and you will name Him Jesus. Matthew 1:21 *(Paraphrase)*
- She will give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus. Matthew 1:21 *(CSB)*
- And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS. Matthew 1:21 *(KJV)*
- She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. Matthew 1:21 *(NIV)*
- She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. Matthew 1:21 *(ESV)*
- And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS. Matthew 1:21 *(NKJV)*

Wow! That is super-duper good news! God planned for Jesus to be born. God chose a woman named Mary and a man named Joseph to be Jesus’ family.

(Show Life Point slide.)

God planned for Jesus to be born. Say that with me: **“God planned for Jesus to be born.”**

God told people that He would send a very special baby. The baby would be God’s Son, Jesus! Jesus would love people and teach them about God. Let’s pray and thank God for sending Jesus.

God, thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus. Thank You for choosing Mary and Joseph to be part of Jesus’ family. We love You! In Jesus name we pray, amen.

It’s time to watch Miss Lindy! Let’s watch and see what’s happening at the library.

MISS LINDY'S LIBRARY

- ➔ Estimated time: 3-5 minutes
- ➔ Tech: *Miss Lindy's Library* video (optional)
- ➔ People: none
- ➔ Props: none

(Play the video.)

CONNECTION POINT GAME

- ➔ Estimated time: 10 minutes
- ➔ Tech: *Connection Point Game* slide
- ➔ People: Connection Point Leader, 10 kids
- ➔ Props: small candy cane

GAME INSTRUCTIONS:

- *Invite 10 kids to play.*
- *Guide players to sit in a circle.*
- *Explain that you will choose a player to turn his back to the group and close his eyes.*
- *Give a child in the circle a candy cane and instruct him to hide it in his lap. Encourage the other children in the circle to pretend to hide the candy cane in their laps.*
- *Lead the player with his back turned to open his eyes and rejoin the group.*
- *Allow the player 3 guesses to determine who has the candy cane.*
- *Reveal the location of the candy cane.*
- *Play again as your time allows.*

CONNECTION POINT LEADER

(Show Connection Point Game slide.)

Let's play a guessing game! I need ten kids to play. *(Choose ten kids. Guide kids to sit in a circle.)*

(Show the candy cane.) Do you like to eat candy canes? *(Allow for responses.)* I do, too! This candy cane is not to eat. This candy cane is to hide!

I will choose one person to turn around and close his eyes. While his eyes are closed I will quietly give the candy cane to someone in the circle. If I give the candy cane to you, hide it in your lap. If I do not give

the candy cane to you, pretend to hide it in your lap! After we hide the candy cane, the person will open his eyes and try to guess who has it!

Does everyone understand how to play? *(Answer any questions and play the game as your time allows. Encourage onlookers to remain quiet and not offer help to the person guessing.)*

Good game, everyone! You are very good hidiers and guessers!

Today we will hear about someone who told very good news. Can you GUESS who told the good news? *(Allow kids to guess.)* Can you GUESS who heard the good news? *(Allow kids to guess.)*

(Hold the candy cane so that it looks like the letter J.) Look how our candy cane makes a letter *J*. The letter *J* is the first letter in the name *Jesus*. After we sing, we will hear who told the good news that *Jesus* would be born!

WORSHIP SONG

- ➔ Estimated time: 3 minutes
- ➔ Tech: Music video, mics for singers, lights (optional)
- ➔ Music: "Come and Worship Him" *(lead sheet available on DVD-ROM)* or download a worship song of your choice
- ➔ People: Worship Leader and/or Worship Team
- ➔ Props: candy cane

WORSHIP LEADER

(Hold candy cane so it makes a letter J.) I like how the candy cane makes a letter *J*. Do you remember whose name begins with *J*? *(Allow for responses.)* That's right! *Jesus* begins with *J*. My name begins with the letter *(your first initial)*. What letter is at the beginning of your name? *(Allow for responses.)*

I'm glad that we can learn about *Jesus*, pray to *Jesus*, and sing about *Jesus*! Let's sing together, right now!

(Show the music video.)

(Lead kids to sit as song ends.)

BIBLE STORY

- ➔ Estimated time: 10 minutes
- ➔ Tech: *Christ Focus* and *Bible Story* slides; *Bible Story Time* video (optional)
- ➔ People: Bible Story Leader
- ➔ Props: Bible, December wall calendar, marker

Option 1: Show the *Bible Story Time* video and conclude with a short prayer.

God, thank You for Your plan to send Jesus. We are happy that the angels told the good news Jesus would be born! Please help us tell others the good news about Jesus. In His name we pray, amen.

Option 2: Tell the following Bible story. Before the session print items on the calendar, such as Christmas Day, Carols, Cookies, Shopping, and so on. Add simple visuals with the words, such as music notes around the word Carols, a gift box on the day marked Shopping, cookies on the day marked Cookies, and a simple manger or star on Christmas Day.

BIBLE STUDY LEADER

(Show Bible Story slide.)

This is such a busy time of year, and I have a lot of things to plan. I write each thing on my calendar, so I won't forget! *(Show calendar.)*

(Point to the day on the calendar marked Carols.) On this day, I plan to go Christmas caroling! Have you ever been Christmas caroling? *(Allow for responses.)* Caroling is when you sing Christmas songs for people! It is lots of fun to go caroling with friends!

(Point to the day marked Cookies.) On this day, I plan to bake sugar cookies, gingerbread cookies, and even snickerdoodles! I love to bake at Christmas time! Every year I bake and bake ... and BAKE!

I like planning fun things at Christmastime. Christmas Day will be here soon! *(Point to Christmas Day on the calendar.)* What things does your family plan to do at Christmastime? *(Allow for responses.)*

Did you know that God had a plan for the very first Christmas? God's plan was very special. Let's hear about it!

(Open Bible to Luke 1.)

God sent an angel named Gabriel to the town of Nazareth. Gabriel had an important message for a young woman who lived there. The woman's name was Mary.

(Read Luke 1:28.)

And the angel came to her and said, "Greetings, favored woman! The Lord is with you."

Mary was surprised and afraid! She wondered why an angel had come to visit her. Gabriel told Mary not to be afraid. Then Gabriel told Mary about God's wonderful plan!

(Read Luke 1:31.)

Now listen: You will ... give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus.

The angel explained that Mary's baby would be very special. Mary's baby would be God's Son! The angel said the baby would grow up to be a great king.

Then Gabriel told Mary more exciting news! Gabriel said Mary's relative, Elizabeth, also was expecting a baby. Elizabeth was old, and she did not have any children. Gabriel said that God can do anything! All of this was part of God's plan.

(Read Luke 1:38.)

"I am the Lord's servant," said Mary. "May it be done to me according to your word." Then the angel left her.

Mary had promised to marry a man named Joseph. He was surprised to hear that Mary would have a baby! Joseph thought about what he should do, and an angel appeared to him in a dream.

(Read Matthew 1:20-21.)

"Joseph ... don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife ... She will give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus."

The angel told Joseph about God's plan. When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel said. Joseph married Mary.

(Close Bible.)

(Show Christ Focus slide.)

Angels told that Jesus would be born! Wow! God sent Jesus to the earth as a real person. Jesus was born, grew up, and taught people about God. This was God's plan from the very beginning! Hundreds of years before Jesus was born, God said He would send a special baby. The baby God promised to send was Jesus! Everything was part of God's plan!

(Refer to calendar.) God didn't need a calendar to make His plans. God knew from the beginning that Mary and Joseph would be Jesus' family.

As your family plans fun things to do this Christmas, remember God's plan to send Jesus. Jesus is the reason we celebrate Christmas!

Let's pray and thank God for His good plan to send Jesus.

God, thank You for Your plan to send Jesus. We are happy that the angels told the good news Jesus would be born! Please help us tell others the good news about Jesus. In His name we pray, amen.

WORSHIP SONG AND OFFERING

- ➔ Estimated time: 3 minutes
- ➔ Tech: mics for singers, lights *(optional)*
- ➔ Music: Use a favorite song or download a worship song of your choice.
- ➔ People: Worship Leader and/or Worship Team
- ➔ Props: none

WORSHIP LEADER

Who told Mary and Joseph the good news that Jesus would be born? *(Allow for responses; Angels told Mary and Joseph.)*

You can tell people the good news about Jesus, too! God sent Jesus to the earth as a real person. You can tell your family, friends, and people you meet that God planned to send Jesus!

Let's sing together. We can smile and be happy because God loves us and sent Jesus.

Optional Giving Segment:

It's time to give our offerings. Some of the money people give helps others hear the good news about Jesus. If you would like to give an offering today,

(Give your own directions for how the kids can give their offerings. After collecting the offering, guide kids to stand for the worship song.)

CONNECTION POINT BIBLE VERSE

- ➔ Estimated time: 5-8 minutes
- ➔ Tech: *Connection Point Bible Verse* and *Bible Verse* slides
- ➔ People: Connection Point leader
- ➔ Props: none

ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS:

- *Say the Bible verse (your preferred version).*
- *Lead kids to repeat the verse after you.*
- *Guide kids to crouch low and whisper the Bible verse.*
- *Instruct kids to jump up and shout: "Jesus."*
- *Repeat the activity several times.*

BIBLE VERSE (SELECT PREFERRED VERSION):

- Mary will have a son, and you will name Him Jesus. Matthew 1:21 *(Paraphrase)*
- She will give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus. Matthew 1:21 *(CSB)*
- And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS. Matthew 1:21 *(KJV)*
- She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. Matthew 1:21 *(NIV)*
- She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. Matthew 1:21 *(ESV)*
- And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS. Matthew 1:21 *(NKJV)*

CONNECTION POINT LEADER

(Show Connection Point Bible Verse slide.)

Listen as I say today's Bible verse. After I say the verse, we will say it together.

(Show Bible Verse slide.)

(Say the Bible verse. Lead kids to repeat it after you.)

God sent angels to talk to Mary and Joseph. The angels told them that Mary would have a special baby. What did the angels say to name the baby? *(Allow for responses; The angels said to name the baby Jesus.)*

How do you think Mary and Joseph felt when they saw and heard an angel? *(Allow for responses.)* Mary and Joseph were probably surprised!

Let's say the Bible verse with a surprise at the end! Crouch low to the floor and whisper the Bible verse with me. Be very quiet. When we say: "Jesus," jump up and shout!

(Lead the activity.)

CONNECTION POINT MISSIONS

- ➔ Estimated time: 5-8 minutes
- ➔ Tech: *Connection Point Missions* slide, "Christmas in Kazakhstan" missions video
- ➔ People: Connection Point leader
- ➔ Props: none

CONNECTION POINT LEADER

(Show Connection Point Missions slide and play the "Christmas in Kazakhstan" missions video immediately following the Connection Point Bible Verse activity.)

It looks very cold in Kazakhstan! Did you see all that snow?

The people who live in Kazakhstan do not celebrate Christmas. They do not know that God sent Jesus to be born. Isn't that sad? Let's pray for the people in Kazakhstan to learn about Jesus.

God, we pray for the people who live in Kazakhstan. Please keep them warm and give them the things they need to live. Most of all, please send someone to tell the people that You love them and sent Jesus. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

REAL LIFE CONNECTIONS

- ➔ Estimated time: 3-5 minutes
- ➔ Tech: *Real Life Connections* and *Life Point* slides, microphone to take to individuals in group *(optional)*
- ➔ People: Bible Study Leader
- ➔ Props: none

BIBLE STUDY LEADER

(Show Real Life Connections slide.)

Let's hear what you remember about today's Bible story. Listen carefully to my directions. *(Give each of the following directions and lead kids to respond.)*

- If you know who told good news, touch your toes. *(angels)*
- If you know the good news the angels told, put your hands on your knees. *(Mary would have a special baby.)*
- If you know what the angels said to name the special baby, put your hands on your head. *(Jesus)*
- If you know whom God chose to be Jesus' family, raise your hand. *(Mary and Joseph)*

Nice job, everyone! You remembered the Bible story very well!

(Show Life Point slide.)

God planned for Jesus to be born. Say that with me: **"God planned for Jesus to be born."**

Mary and Joseph learned about God's plan. Soon Mary would have a baby boy. Mary's baby would be named Jesus.

Jesus is special because He is God's Son. God sent Jesus because He loves people. That means God loves you, too! I'm happy you came to church today. I hope you will come again next time.

Leader note: *If you plan to utilize the after-session Huddle Up, dismiss kids to their small groups.*