



DAWSONpreschool
ministry

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Dawson Preschool Ministry Christmas Family Devotional & Advent Calendar



**"God loved us and sent His Son."
1 John 4:10**



Dawson Family of Faith December Events

December 2

Preschool Play Day: Celebrate Jesus! 9:30 a.m.

December 8

Christmas Puppet Show, 10:00 a.m. (Sunday School)

December 21 & 22

Candlelight at Dawson, 5:00 p.m.

December 22

“Happy Birthday Jesus” Party (Sunday School)

December 24

Christmas Eve Service, 5:00 p.m.

Find more details about these events: www.dawsonchurch.org

Share With Us

Please share your experience with us! If your advent activity times are meaningful for your family, we’d love to hear from you. You can tag Dawson Preschool Ministry in a photo on social media or send Brooke an email.

Daily Advent Bible Reading

Flip to the back page of this book for a list of scripture to use for a Daily Advent Bible Reading.

Supplies Needed

The activities suggested in this book were chosen because we feel families will already have most of the needed supplies. Of course, you can get creative and add embellishments. Here is a list of some of the supplies needed: blank paper, construction paper, markers, crayons, scissors, glue, tape, glitter, yarn or string, paper plates.



Christmas 2013



Add a photo here of your family experiencing Christmas family fun!

Our favorite Advent Family Activity was:

DAILY ADVENT BIBLE READING

Use the following Bible reading plan to experience God's Word, love, and promises each day leading up to Christmas Day.

- Dec 1: Isaiah 40:3-5
- Dec 2: Isaiah 40:9-11
- Dec 3: Isaiah 52:7-10
- Dec 4: Isaiah 7:10-14
- Dec 5: Isaiah 11:1-5
- Dec 6: Isaiah 9:6-7
- Dec 7: Jeremiah 33:14-16
- Dec 8: Micah 5:2
- Dec 9: Zechariah 6:12-13
- Dec 10: Psalm 89:1-4
- Dec 11: John 3:16
- Dec 12: Galatians 4:4-5
- Dec 13: 2 Corinthians 9:15
- Dec 14: John 1:1-8
- Dec 15: John 1:9-18
- Dec 16: Mark 1:1-3
- Dec 17: Luke 1:5-13
- Dec 18: Luke 1:14-17
- Dec 19: Luke 1:18-25
- Dec 20: Luke 1:26-38
- Dec 21: Luke 1:39-45
- Dec 22: Luke 1:46-56
- Dec 23: Luke 1:57-66
- Dec 24: Luke 1:67-80

Christmas Day: Luke 2:1-21



Dear Preschool Families,

On the heels of Thanksgiving, a season of thanking God for His many good gifts, we enter the Advent Season. Advent is a special time to prepare our hearts for Christmas and to celebrate God's greatest gift, His Son, Jesus. December is such an exciting time for children who are delighted by the lights, decorations, music, and fun associated with Christmas. In all the merriment, it is easy for us to lose sight of the fact that Christmas is, first and foremost, a time to recognize and rejoice that,

“God loved us and sent His Son.”
1 John 4:10

The Dawson Preschool Ministry staff and I want to encourage you to keep Christ at the center of your Christmas celebration. We have prepared this booklet of preschool-friendly devotions and activities to help you lead Family Faith Talks and seize teachable moments to remind your children that Baby Jesus is alive today and He loves them very much. A digital version (with links to patterns, activities, etc.) is available on the Dawson Preschool Ministry website (www.dawsonchurch.org/programs/filter,1) and Facebook page for your convenience. We hope and pray that this Advent Christmas Family Devotion Book will be a blessing to your family and will lead to great memories and times of worship.

As always, please let me know if I can help or pray for your family in specific ways.

Merry Christmas!

Brooke Gibson
Minister to Preschoolers
Dawson Family of Faith

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www.dawsonchurch.org



Follow Dawson Preschool Ministry:



Pinterest



Day
25

Merry Christmas!



*"For unto you is born this day...
a Saviour which is Christ the Lord."*

Luke 2:11

Use this book to share the good news about Jesus with family and friends on Christmas Day. Repeat your family's favorite activities. Share a devotion. Act out the Christmas Story. Play a Christmas Game. Sing Christmas Carols. Enjoy family time and celebrate God's greatest gift, His Son, Jesus!



*Happy Birthday, Jesus!
We Love You!*

Day
24

Sweet
Treats

Birthday Party for Jesus

“God loved us and sent His Son.”
1 John 4:10

Remind children that tomorrow is Christmas Day, Jesus’ Birthday!
Have a birthday party for Jesus. Children can make party hats and/ or decorations. Serve cookies or cupcakes with candles. Sing “Happy Birthday” to Jesus and let each child blow out a candle. Say a prayer of thanks because “God loved us and sent His Son, Jesus!”
(1 John 4:10)



Day
1

The Bible
Says...

God Has A Special Plan!

“Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given.”
Isaiah 9:6

Tell the Christmas Story: This month we will be reading the story of Jesus’ birth in the Bible. This is also the story of Christmas, because Christmas is Jesus’ birthday!

Gabriel was an angel. Sometimes he took special news from God to people on earth. One day God sent Gabriel to a young lady. Her name was Mary. He said, “Greetings! God is with you!” Mary was afraid. She wondered what he meant. But Gabriel said, “Do not be afraid. God loves you. He is going to give you a baby. You will name him Jesus. He will be God’s Son!” Mary was surprised. “How can this be true?” she asked. “Nothing is impossible with God,” said Gabriel.

Mary loved a man named Joseph. They were going to get married. One day God sent an angel to Joseph in a dream. The angel said to Joseph, “Mary will have a baby. The baby will be God’s Son. You will name him Jesus. God has a special job for you. He has chosen you to be Jesus’ father on earth.” When Joseph woke up, he took Mary home as his wife. They started getting ready for a new baby- God’s Son, Jesus!

Sing a song:

God Is So Good

God is so good. God is so good.
God is so good. He’s so good to me.
God sent his son. God sent his son.
God sent his son. He’s so good to me.
I love Him so. I love Him so.
I love Him so. He’s so good to me.

Pray to God: Dear God, Thank you for making us and loving us. Thank you for your Son Jesus. Help us remember that Christmas is Jesus’ birthday and that He is the best thing about Christmas. Amen.

Day
2



Paper Plate Angel

"The angel said to Mary: Name the baby Jesus."

Luke 1:31

God sent an angel to tell Mary and Joseph the good news that Baby Jesus would be born soon. Today, God wants us to tell people the good news that Jesus loves them! Make a paper plate angel as a reminder to tell the good news.

Follow these directions to make a simple paper plate angel, or go to the link below for instructions to make the more challenging version. When your angel is complete, find a place to display it in your home and sing:

"Go Tell It on the Mountain."



SIMPLE ANGEL

DIRECTIONS:

- * Cut one triangle shape out of a paper plate.
- * Glue or tape it to the rest of the plate to make an angel shape.
- * Cut a circle/ head from another plate.
- * Decorate the angel: draw a face, color, add glitter, etc.

* For a more challenging angel, visit our website: www.dawsonchurch.org/programs/filter,1 and click on Day 2. *

Day
23



Act out the Christmas Story

"Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased."

Luke 2:14

Assign each family member a role as a character in the Christmas story. Add costumes and props for more fun.



Mary, Joseph & Baby Jesus



Wisemen



Angels

Day
22



Bright Shining Star Ornament

“Let your light shine in front of others so they will praise God.”
Matthew 5:16

Remind children that the wisemen followed a bright shining star to find Baby Jesus. We can let our “lights shine for Jesus” by sharing God’s love with others. Make a Star ornament for your Christmas tree to remind your family to shine for Jesus.

DIRECTIONS:

- * Cut a star shape from sturdy paper or the center of a paper plate.
- * Let children decorate the star. (Suggestions: color, sprinkle with glue and glitter, wrap with yellow yarn, glue on torn pieces of yellow construction paper or tissue paper, etc.).
- * Add a Bible verse (Matthew 5:16) and the date to the back of the ornament.
- * When you hang the ornament on your tree, sing the Christmas version of “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star.”

Twinkle Twinkle Little Star

Twinkle, twinkle little star
How I wonder what you are
Up above the world so high
Like a diamond in the sky.

Twinkle, twinkle way up there
You’re with us Lord, we’re aware
In a dusty manger low
You were born for us to know.

Twinkle, twinkle long ago
Little star began to glow
Guiding those with gifts to bring
Pointing to the newborn king

Twinkle, twinkle little star
Now we know Lord, who you are!



Day
3



Christmas Movie Night

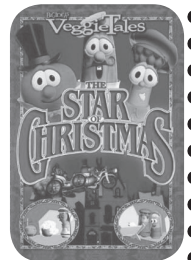
“Give thanks to the Lord for He is good; His love endures forever.”
Psalm 118:1

Use family movie time to reinforce good character and the true meaning of Christmas. (See suggested movies below.)



Christian Christmas Movies:

- * *It’s a Meaningful Life* (Veggie Tales)
- * *The Gift of Christmas* (Really Woolly)
- * *Saint Nicholas: A Story of Joyful Giving* (Veggie Tales)
- * *The Star of Christmas* (Veggie Tales)
- * *The Crippled Lamb* (Max Lucado)
- * *The Little Drummer Boy* (Veggie Tales)
- * *The Toy That Saved Christmas* (Veggie Tales)



- You can also use secular movies to reinforce Christ-like Character.
- For example, Watch *The Grinch Who Stole Christmas* and remind children that God loves us and gives us many great gifts (family, friends, food, love) that we don’t put under a Christmas Tree (James 1:17). Watch *Rudolph The Red Nosed Reindeer* and remind children that they are special and God has great plans for them (Psalm 139:14)

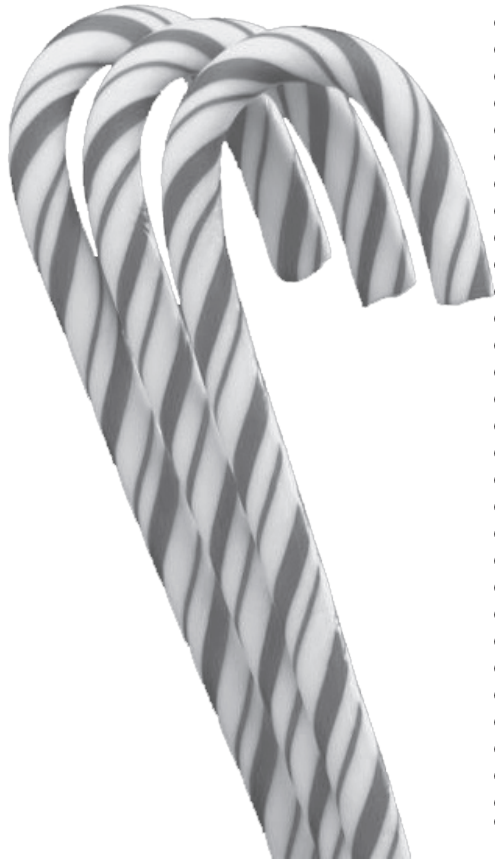
Day
4

Sweet
Treats

Candy Cane

*"Taste and see that the Lord is good."
Psalm 34:8*

Give each member a candy cane to eat. Say: "Did you know that a candy cane reminds us of Jesus?" Read the poem below to find out how!



Legend of the Candy Cane

Look at the Candy Cane -
what do you see?
Stripes that are red
like the blood shed for me.
White is for my Savior
who's sinless and pure!
"J" is for Jesus,
my Lord, that's for sure!
Turn it around
and a staff you will see -
Jesus, my shepherd,
was born for me!

- Author Unknown

There is also a book and a movie about the Legend of the Candy Cane.

Day
21

The Bible
Says...

God's Son, Jesus, Loves You

*"At the name of Jesus, everyone will bow down and say,
'Jesus Christ is Lord.'
Philippians 2:10-11*

Tell the Christmas Story: The birth of Baby Jesus was just one part of God's amazing plan. That special baby, God's only Son, grew up to be a man. Jesus was a kind and loving friend to everyone. He taught people that God made them and loved them. He healed people who were sick and hurt. He did things that no one else could do. Jesus is alive today! He lives in heaven with God. He loves you and wants to be your friend! There are so many fun and exciting things about the Christmas season, but the birth of Jesus is the best part of Christmas!



Sing a song:

Jesus Loves Me
Jesus loves me, this I know.
For the Bible tells me so.
Little ones to Him belong.
They are weak, but He is strong.
Yes, Jesus loves me.
Yes, Jesus loves me.
Yes, Jesus loves me.
The Bible tells me so.

Pray to God: Dear God, Thank you for Jesus! Help me to be like Jesus. I will choose to be kind to everyone, to help others and to tell them that you love them. Amen.

Day
20

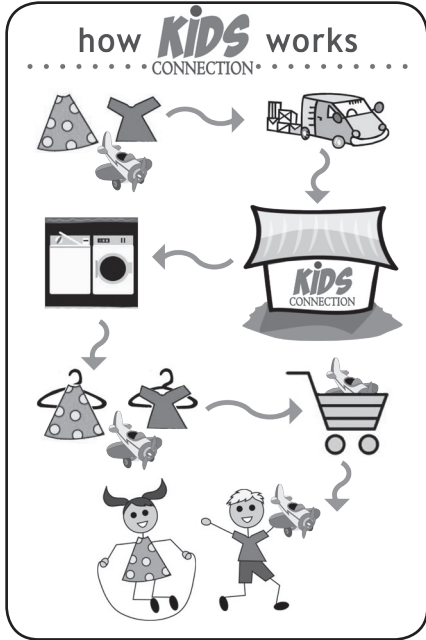
Share with Kids Connection

*"God loves a cheerful giver."
2 Corinthians 9:7*

Just like the wisemen gave gifts, we can share with others!

Select gently used clothes and children's items your family can donate to Kids Connection for children in need.

Pray for the children who will receive these items.



* Learn more about Kids Connection at
www.dawsonchurch.org/kidsconnection. *



Day
5

Thank You Notes

*"Pray for each other."
James 5:16*

Say a prayer of thanks to God for the people who regularly invest in the lives of your children (teachers at church and school, coaches, grandparents, babysitters, etc.)

Help your children draw pictures/write thank you notes to these special people who influence their lives.

You may want to include a photo of your child, and/or a favorite Bible verse/blessing.



* See the article "How to Help Your Child Write A Thank You Note Before She Can Even Write" on our website. Go to www.dawsonchurch.org/programs/filter,1 and click on Day 5. *



Day
6

The Bible
Says...

Baby Jesus is Born!

“She wrapped Him in cloths and laid him in a manger.”

Luke 2:7

Tell the Christmas Story: One day Joseph had to take a trip to the city of Bethlehem. So Mary went with him. The city of Bethlehem was crowded. Many people had come there. Joseph and Mary looked for a place to stay. But there was no room in any house. All the beds were full. People were even sleeping on the floors. So Joseph and Mary had to stay in a stable where the donkeys and horses stayed.



That night, the baby was born. It was God’s baby son. Mary and Joseph named him Jesus, just as the angel had told them to do. They wrapped him up so he would be warm. Mary made a soft bed for him in a manger. The baby Jesus slept there. Mary loved him. Joseph loved him. And God loved him.

Sing a song:

Away in a Manger

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed.
The little Lord Jesus lay down his sweet head.
The stars in the sky look down where he lay.
The Little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

Pray to God:

Dear God, Thank you for Baby Jesus! Help us remember that Jesus is your son and our friend. Amen.

Day
19

Sweet
Treats

M&M

Christmas Poem

*“When they saw the star they were overjoyed.
They bowed down and worshiped Jesus.”*

Matthew 2:10-11

If you turn an M&M, the “m” can become an “E”, “W” or “3”.
Read the poem below to see what each one stands for
and how it reminds us of the birth of Jesus!

m

“E” is for the East
where the star shone so bright.

m

“M” is for the manger where the
baby Jesus slept at night.

m

“3” is for the wisemen bearing gifts,
with witch they came.

m

“W” is for worship, Hallelujah!
Praise His name!

Day
18



Christmas Light Road Trip

"Jesus said: I am the light of the world. Those who follow me will never walk in darkness."
John 8:12

Put on your pajamas and drive around to look at Christmas light displays. Remember the star the wisemen followed was brighter than all these lights.

CHRISTMAS LIGHT SCAVENGER HUNT:

See if you can find the following things on your road trip:

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| _____ Candy Cane | _____ Snowman |
| _____ Nativity Scene | _____ Star |
| _____ Train | _____ Inflatable |
| _____ Christmas Tree | _____ Present |
| _____ Blinking Lights | _____ All White Lights |



Day
7



Handprint Manger Scene

"A Savior has been born to you."
Luke 2:11

Make a handprint manger scene to display in your home or give as a gift to someone special. Use the picture below as a guide, but make variations as needed.

DIRECTIONS:

- * First, help your child make a handprint (with brown paint, or trace hand on paper and color, or trace and cut out handprint from construction paper).
- * Make a baby Jesus (draw on paper and cut out or make from construction paper or fabric).
- * Draw or add a star. Use yarn, hay, or shredded paper to make hay.
- * Add a favorite Christmas Bible verse or the poem below.



*"I used my hand to make a manger, a place for Jesus to lay.
I'll use my heart so full of love, as a place for Jesus to stay."*

Day
8

Christmas Game Night

*"His name will be Jesus."
Isaiah 9:6*

Enjoy family fun as you play the following simple games:

CHRISTMAS CHARADES:

Take turns acting out Bible characters or things related to the Christmas story while other family members guess what you are acting out. (Suggestions: angels singing, Baby Jesus, sheep, riding a donkey to Bethlehem, Joseph knocking on the door to the inn, shepherds afraid in the fields, Mary rocking Baby Jesus, wisemen bowing before Jesus, etc.)

WHAT'S MISSING:

Use your family's nativity scene to retell the story of Jesus birth. Name each piece/ character. Cover the nativity scene with a sheet or towel. Remove one piece from the set. Then, take away the sheet and see if the family members can guess which piece is missing. Return that piece and continue playing.

NAME THAT TUNE:

Take turns humming (or whistling) a Christmas Carol while other family members try to guess the song. (Suggestions: "We Wish You a Merry Christmas," "Go Tell It on the Mountain," "Away in a Manger," "O Come Let Us Adore Him" and "Jingle Bells")

WHERE'S BABY JESUS?

Use a baby doll or the Baby Jesus from your family's nativity set to play hide and seek. Take turns hiding Baby Jesus somewhere in the room while other family members keep their eyes closed (or hide him in another room). Then, everyone tries to find Baby Jesus. You may give hints by baa-ing like the sheep in the stable. Baa loudly when someone gets close to Baby Jesus' hiding place.

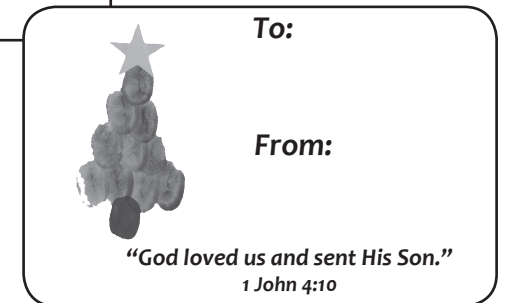


Day
17

Thumbprint Gift Tags

*"Tell everyone about Jesus."
Matthew 28:20*

Use your child's thumbprint to make the shape of a heart and/ or Christmas tree on small cards to use as gift tags on gifts. (For ink, use: red/ green ink pads OR mix alcohol and 2-3 drops of food coloring in a milk cap.) Make a gifttag for each family member/ friend that you will give a gift to this season. Pray for each person as you work.



* For a printable template for the cards shown here, visit our website, www.dawsonchurch.org/programs/filter,1 and click on Christmas Devotional: Day 17. *

Day
16

The Bible
Says...

The Wise Men Follow a Star to Baby Jesus

“They bowed down and worshipped Him.”

Matthew 2:11

Tell the Christmas Story:

God put a special star in the sky when Jesus was born. Some wise men who lived in the east saw this star. They knew it was a sign. It meant that a baby king had been born. These wise men wanted to visit the baby. So they followed the star for a long way. And the star led them right to the place where Jesus was. They were very happy they had found him. They bowed down. They gave him gifts: sweet-smelling gifts, sparkling, golden gifts.



Sing a song:

O Come Let Us Adore Him
O come let us adore Him.
O come let us adore Him.
O come let us adore Him,
Christ, the Lord!

Pray to God:

Dear God, Thank you for the story of the wise men. We want to worship Jesus too! We will worship him this Christmas by singing songs about him, praying to him and telling others about the night he was born. Amen.

Day
9

Sweet
Treats

Christmas Cookies

“We work together.”

1 Corinthians 2:9

Work together to bake cookies or other treats. Sing along to Christmas music as you work. Save some cookies to share (see Day 10)!

EASY SUGAR COOKIES (from www.allrecipes.com)

INGREDIENTS:

Makes 48 cookies

- 2 3/4 cups of flour • 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder • 1 cup butter, softened
- 1 1/2 cups of sugar • 1 egg • 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

DIRECTIONS:

- * Preheat oven to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C). In a small bowl, stir together flour, baking soda, and baking powder. Set aside.
- * In a large bowl, cream together the butter and sugar until smooth. Beat in egg and vanilla. Gradually blend in the dry ingredients. Roll rounded teaspoonfuls of dough into balls, and place onto ungreased cookie sheets.
- * Bake 8 to 10 minutes in the preheated oven, or until golden. Let stand on cookie sheet two minutes before removing to cool on wire racks.



Day
10

Tidings of Good Cheer

“Do good and share with others.”
Hebrews 13:16

Remind your children that God wants us to share His love and the good news about Jesus with others.

Think of someone you know who could use a reminder that Jesus loves them, perhaps a lonely neighbor or a family member who is going through hard times. Encourage your children to make a Christmas card for him or her.

Then, deliver the card, some of the cookies or treats you made yesterday, a hug, and a smile to that person to share God’s love.



Day
15

Christmas Caroling

“I will praise God with a song.”
Psalm 69:30

Put on some festive clothes and spread Christmas cheer to your neighbors by singing Christmas songs about Jesus to them. This also presents a great opportunity to invite them to church, for a special Christmas event, or regular Sunday services and Bible study.

Variation: Record your children singing a Christmas carol in front of your Christmas tree and send it to family and friends.



SUGGESTED CHRISTMAS SONGS:

- * “We Wish you A Merry Christmas”
- * “Go Tell It on the Mountain”
- * “Away in a Manger”
- * “O Come Let Us Adore Him”



Day
14

Sweet
Treats

Hot Chocolate & Marshmallows

"God gives us things to enjoy."

1 Timothy 6:17

Enjoy yummy hot chocolate together as a family. For every marshmallow in your cup, name something special about Jesus. (He is God's Son, He taught people about God, He healed people, He was born in a stable, etc.). Say a prayer to thank God for Jesus.

HOT CHOCOLATE (from www.allrecipes.com)

INGREDIENTS:

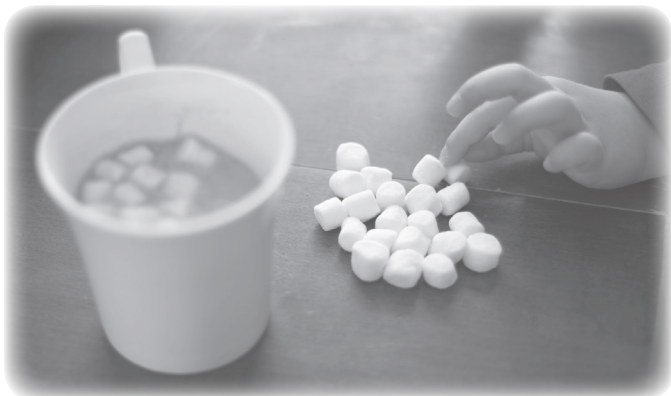
Makes 3 servings

- 3 cups milk
- 1/3 cup semisweet chocolate, grated
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 egg

DIRECTIONS:

* Put milk into a microwave-safe container and cook on High in microwave for 2 minutes. Mix in chocolate, sugar, and cinnamon. In a small bowl, whisk an egg until smooth, then mix it into the chocolate mixture.

* Return to microwave and cook on High for 3 to 4 minutes or until foamy (be careful not to let it boil.) Whisk until smooth and pour into 3 mugs. Garnish with a sprinkle of cinnamon if desired.



Day
11

The Bible
Says...

Shepherds Learn of Jesus' Birth

"The shepherds praised God for all that they had seen and heard."

Luke 2:20

Tell the Christmas Story: It was still night. Outside the town of Bethlehem, some sheep were sleeping. Shepherds were watching them. Suddenly an angel came to the shepherds. And God's glory shone around them. The shepherds were afraid. But the angel said, "Do not be afraid. I am bringing you good news. This is happy news for all the people: today in Bethlehem, God's Son was born. You can go see him. He is wrapped warm and snug in a manger. Then many, many angels came from heaven. They praised God. "Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth!"



When the angels left, the shepherds said, "Let's go find this baby!" So they hurried to town. They found the stable. And they saw the new baby. Then the shepherds left, thanking God. They told everyone what had happened. The people were amazed. And Mary always remembered this special time.

Sing a song:

Go Tell it on the Mountain

Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere.
Go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!

Pray to God: Dear God, Help us show Jesus that we love him by praising him with prayers and songs and by telling other people about Jesus, just like the shepherds did. Amen.

Day
12

Family Nativity Scene



“God so loved the world that He gave His Son.”
John 3:16

Work together as a family to make a nativity scene that you can display in your home to remind you that Christmas is a celebration of Jesus' birth.

This can be as simple as assigning each family member one character to draw on a piece of paper (Mary, Joseph, Baby Jesus, angel, shepherds, etc.). Cut them out and post them on a wall or refrigerator.

Or, you can get really crafty and print, color, and cut out characters (patterns provided in the link below) and attach to toilet paper rolls to make a nativity set like the one pictured here. As you work, sing, “Away in a Manger.”



* For a printable nativity pattern, visit our website, www.dawsonchurch.org/programs/filter,1 and click on Christmas Devotional: Day 12. *

Day
13

Christmas Book



“Jesus said: Love one another.”
John 15:17

Turn off all the lights except the Christmas tree lights. Choose a favorite Christmas book and read it together while lying under the Christmas tree. (See suggested Christmas books below.)



CHRISTIAN CHRISTMAS BOOK SUGGESTIONS

- * *The Beginner's Bible: The Very First Christmas* (ZonderKids)
- * *The Berenstain Bears and the Joy of Giving* (Berenstain)
- * *God Gave Us Christmas* (Lisa Tawn Bergren)
- * *Humphrey's First Christmas* (Carol Heyer)
- * *The Crippled Lamb* (Max Lucado)
- * *My March to the Manger* (Mary Manz Simon)
- * *Christmas in the Manger* (Nola Buck)
- * *A Star for Jesus* (Crystal Bowman)
- * *Baby Jesus* (Luana Rinaldo)

