

First Sunday after Christmas



The Children's Illustrated Bible
pages 190–193

Jesus was born in a stable in Bethlehem, because there was no room in the inn for his parents, Mary and Joseph. The angels went to the shepherds in the hills to tell them to “Come see,” and they traveled to Bethlehem to see baby Jesus.

—*Luke 2:1–20 adapted*

Jesus Is the Light

Share the story of Jesus’ birth in Luke 2:1–20 and in *The Children's Illustrated Bible*, pages 190–193. Have kids dramatize the story of Jesus’ birth on the KidsPage. They may want to wear simple costumes to portray the people in this story.

You may also wish to let kids choose who they would like to portray. Have them make up their own version of the Christmas story. One of the kids may wish to narrate or tell the story from Jesus’ point of view—or the point of view of another character. Older kids may also interpret the story in modern times. What setting today would be comparable to the stable? Today, who might be like the shepherds? Taking this modern-day view might give students a clearer understanding of the story of Jesus’ birth.

Afterward, discuss this story as if it were another of Jesus’ parables. If this story was a parable (didn’t really happen), what might it teach us?

1. God chooses ordinary people (Mary and Joseph) to do God’s extraordinary things.
2. Miracles can happen anyplace (like in a stable, in a manger, on vacation).
3. God invites everyone to see miracles. (Shepherds came to the stable; later the wise men came. God put a star over the event to guide everyone to the stable.)
4. God sends angels to ordinary people (an angel came to Mary, Joseph, and the shepherds).
5. If we’re humble and say yes to God, we can do great things.

No Light

Read John 1:1–14. This scripture tells us three things we believe as Christians:

- Jesus was with God from the beginning.
- Jesus played an important role in the Creation.
- Jesus’ purpose was to bring life and light to everyone.

Jesus was the light that came to us! We celebrate Christmastime with more light than usual: houses and trees covered with sparkling lights, Christmas trees decorated with lights, candles, and much more.

Have kids sit at tables with a pencil, paper, and a large, paper grocery bag. Have kids cover their heads with the bags, then instruct them to draw a self-portrait with the pencil and paper in front of them. No peeking allowed! After a minute, collect all the portraits, and have kids take the bags off their heads. Hold up the portraits one at a time, and see if kids can guess who they are. Discuss:

1. Why is it difficult to recognize these portraits? (It’s not that they’re drawn poorly, but they didn’t have light to see what they were drawing.)
2. What difference does it make to have light and be able to see? (Kids may now wish to draw another picture of themselves, without a bag!)

Light all the candles from the last four weeks. Also light the center candle for today, the Christ candle. Ask kids how Jesus came to them today—how they celebrated Christmas, how it made them feel, how they brought Jesus’ love to others.



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Story of Jesus’ Birth
(actors: Jesus as narrator, Mary, Joseph, baby Jesus, shepherds, innkeeper, sheep)

Jesus: This is how I was born. First, my parents went to Bethlehem.

Joseph: Innkeeper, may we have a room at your inn? My wife is about to have our baby, but everyone has turned us down. The whole town is full.

Innkeeper: We are full here, too, but you may stay in our stable. It is warm and clean. And you’ll have the animals for company!

Jesus: So I was born in a stable. My parents put me in a feeding trough called a manger, and they wrapped me in cloths.

Shepherds: Angels told us that our savior was born and we have come to see him!

Mary: Here he is! You may hold him! He loves being close to everyone!
—Adapted from Luke 2:1–20

What were the five best things about Christmas this year?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____
