

# God Is with Us

(LOVE)

God gives the best gifts.

## Scripture Words

God is with us.—Number 14:9

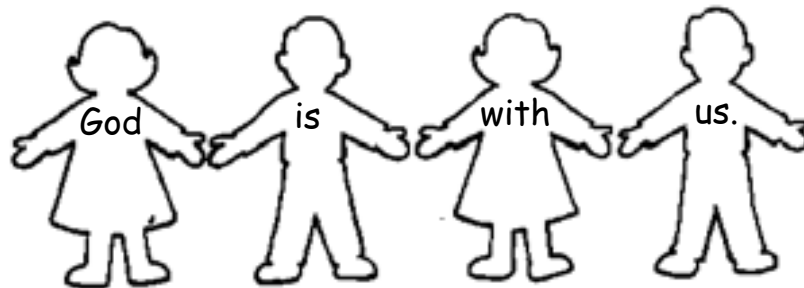
We have seen his star.  
—Matthew 3:2 IV

God loves us and sent Jesus.  
—John 3:16 adapted

## Here We Come!

As the children arrive, have small wrapped gifts waiting. Each child can choose one, but must wait to open it until all are ready. Talk about where the gift came from, why it was given, and who gave it. It will be hard for the children to wait. Why is that? What is exciting about knowing someone has given us a gift. Why is it important to open the gift? What should we do after opening the gift?

## Scripture Words and Worship



—Numbers 14:9

Print each word of the scripture from Numbers on one child in a connected string (see above). The Matthew scripture can be printed on star shapes. Use a heart shape for “God loves us” and a baby Jesus for “sent Jesus.” Children can have individual copies to take home.

## Live and Learn

The story of the visit of the wise men can be found in Matthew 2: 1–12. Let the children retell the birth story with the shepherds and angels. Introduce the next set of visitors. Set the nativity scene in one corner of the room with a bright star hanging above it. Move the children to the opposite corner to begin the story of the wise men seeing a new star. Walk around the room and the furniture for a long journey to Bethlehem.

The wise men brought gifts for the new baby. Use props to help the children understand the gifts were precious. What gifts would the children bring to baby Jesus? How can they give gifts to Jesus at this Christmas time?

## Up and at 'Em

Take a walk through the church to look at the decorations. Let the children tell you which ones they like best and why. Connect what they see to the stories they have been hearing in class.

## Sense-ations

Give each child a picture of baby Jesus and the empty gift boxes. (See the Patterns section.) Encourage them to draw pictures inside the boxes to represent things God has given them. This might include family members, friends, teachers, or any of the basic needs.

Tiny bows can be added to the picture when



finished.

Glitter can be added to star shapes to help remind the children of the story of the wise men. Share Christmas snack treats while they work. Talk about the sounds and smells of Christmas, as well as the sights.

## Moving Music

Choose Christmas music the children have become familiar with and enjoy.

## Story Talking

Children in this age group have learned that even



though they cannot see a parent, the parent is still “with” them. When they are separated, the parent still thinks about the child, wonders what the child is doing, and wants to make sure the child is safe. The child knows that the parent will eventually come to get the child (or send someone trustworthy) and will care for the needs of the child, such as food, clothing, and shelter.

During the holidays, people often visit. Let the children talk about who is coming to their house or what they are going to do for Christmas. Who do they like to get together with? How do they keep in touch after the holidays?

God did something very special for us. God has always been there, and a few people knew. But God wanted everyone to know. So God asked Jesus to go to Earth and tell the people in person. Jesus was glad to do that. But Jesus started out the same way all people start out. Jesus began as a baby.

Let the children tell you what they know about babies and how they grow. What things can they do in class that a baby couldn't? What do they think Jesus did as a baby? as a two-year old? as a five-year old? How old would he have to be to tell people about God? What would he tell people about God? What things can the children tell others about God and Jesus?

## There We Go

Send the children out with their gifts, pictures, scriptures, and decorations. Encourage them to share what they learned with others.

