

Celebrating with My Family and Friends

Meeting 38

Holidays
Look at Me

Bible Story: Wise Men Visited Jesus (Matthew 2:1-12)

Bible Phrase: Men brought gifts to Jesus (Matthew 2:11).

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Levels of Biblical Learning

Family

- God wants family members to be kind to one another.

Jesus

- God sent Jesus to earth because He loves us.

Life Application

I can celebrate Christmas with my family and friends.

Bible Skill

Remembers and can retell a familiar Bible story.

Early Arriver Activity

Gift-wrap Containers—Place the materials on tables. As the children arrive, invite them to wrap the containers with the paper. Make sure there are enough containers for each child to wrap a gift. Talk about how special it is to receive a gift at times of celebration like Christmas and birthdays. Talk with the preschoolers about presents they would like to give to parents or siblings rather than focusing on what they would like to receive.

WARM-UP

Get-involved Activity (5–10 minutes)

Sit in a circle with the wrapped gifts in the center. Allow one child to spin the spinner. That child may then pick one of the wrapped “gifts” from the *Early Arriver Activity* and give it to a child wearing that color. The child who received the first gift will then spin the spinner and give a gift to a child wearing that color. Play until each child has had a turn and received a gift. Provide guidance so that no child receives a gift more than once.

Some of the gifts used in this activity will be used again during Bible story time, so encourage the children to have fun receiving the gift but not to unwrap it. Remind them that these pretend gifts are empty boxes, unlike the real gifts which they will hear about during the Bible story.

Instruct the children to place all the gifts used in WARM-UP near the front of the room.

Provide:

- Precut sheets of gift wrap
- Tape
- Empty boxes or other containers with lids

Provide:

- Spinner from *Giant Game Floor Mat*
- Wrapped “gifts” from *Early Arriver Activity*

Option: If the spinner is not available, cut small squares of construction paper and place in a gift bag. The preschoolers may pick a card instead.

Tip: Wrap a few “gifts” before the meeting, so there are plenty to choose from.

WORKOUT

Group Learning (15–20 minutes)

1. Begin the meeting. Guide the preschoolers to sit in the WORKOUT area and say the following rhyme to prepare to listen to the story:

Let's sit for a story.

Let's sit for a story.

Let's sit for a story.

Please come and sit with me

(Name) is here to listen; he came to sit with me.

Continue until you have said every child's name.

2. Tell the Bible story. Open your Bible to Matthew and tell the kids that this true story is from the Book of Matthew in the Bible. Tell the story without the actors, ignoring the directions in parentheses which will be used for review.

Provide:
 Bible

Wise Men Visited Jesus

One day some wise men from a faraway place came to Jerusalem. (*Wise men walk across the room.*) They were looking for a special child who had been born. (*Wise men look around the room.*) They were looking for Jesus. The wise men went to see King Herod.

“Where is this special child?” the wise men asked. “We have seen a bright star in the sky. We know the star means that this special child has been born.” (*Wise men can say these lines in unison or one child can say each line.*)

When King Herod heard this, he became upset. (*King Herod stomps his foot.*) He had not heard about Jesus' being born. The king called together all the church helpers. He asked them whether they knew where Jesus was to be born. (*King Herod asks church helpers: “Where will this Jesus be born?”*)

“We know that a special child was to be born in Bethlehem,” the church helpers answered. (*All church helpers can answer in unison or choose one child to say the line. The church helpers all point toward Mary and Joseph.*)

Then King Herod told the wise men, “Go to Bethlehem and look for Jesus.”

The wise men began their trip to Bethlehem. (*Wise men walk toward Mary and Joseph.*) The same star they had seen went ahead of them and stopped over the place where Jesus was. The wise men followed the star to the house where Jesus and His family lived.

The wise men went into the house and found Mary and Jesus. (*Mary holds the baby Jesus doll and shows him to the wise men.*) The men were so happy to see Jesus! (*Wise men smile and laugh.*) They bowed down and thanked God for sending Jesus. (*Wise men bow down to pray.*) The wise men gave Jesus gifts—gold, frankincense, and myrrh. (*Wise men place the gifts at the feet of Mary and Joseph.*) Then the wise men left to return to their home far away. (*Wise men walk away from Mary and Joseph, smiling and waving.*)

—Based on Matthew 2:1-12

3. Review the Bible story and practice a Bible skill. Distribute the Bible times costumes for all of the children. Domes can be used as crowns. Use a doll to represent Jesus in the story. Tell the children that you will retell the Bible story and they can play it out as you tell it. Enlist children for the following parts:

Wise men—3 to 10 children can act as the wise men. Give the children three of the wrapped gifts to represent gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

King Herod—one child

Church helpers—2 to 10 children can play the part of the church helpers

Mary—one girl

Joseph—one boy

As the children put away the Bible times costumes, ask them to tell what they remember about the Bible story.

4. Sing and celebrate. Say: “The birth of Jesus was a time to celebrate. Listen to this song of celebration.” Play “Sing Aloud” once as the children listen to the words. Play again and give the children instruments to play along with the song. If real instruments are not available, the preschoolers may use the domes as drums, wave bandannas to the music, or pretend to play guitar with foam noodles.

5. Learn the Bible phrase. Instruct the children to sit in a circle. Pass one of the wrapped gifts around the circle. Say: “The Bible phrase is **Men brought gifts to Jesus** (Matthew 2:11). The Book of Matthew is in the New Testament. Let’s play a game to learn it.” Instruct the children to pass the gift around the circle. As each child receives the gift, she will say one word of the verse. Start passing the gift slowly, and increase the speed as the children learn the verse.

6. Apply the Bible learning. Ask the children to think about special things their families do to celebrate Christmas. Name some of the traditions in your own family to help give them ideas. Then pass the gift around the circle again, allowing the children to tell how they celebrate Jesus’ birth.

7. Pray. Lead the children to pray, thanking God for sending Jesus. Pause to allow each child who wants to pray to thank God for something. Close by asking God to help the children remember that He sent Jesus because He loves them.

8. Move to STRETCHING. Describe the STRETCHING activities. Invite the children to move to an activity when you sing their names.

Teacher: *Where is Isaac? Where is Isaac?*

Isaac: *Here I am. Here I am.*

Teacher: *How are you this morning?*

Isaac: *Very well, I thank you.*

Teacher: *Hop away. Hop away.*

(Isaac hops away to an activity)

Repeat using other children’s names. Also vary the final action: walk, skip, or jump away, and so on.

Provide:

- Bible times costumes
- Domes
- Doll
- Wrapped “gifts” from *Early Arriver Activity*

Tip: Use robes, towels and scarves to create Bible times costumes.

Provide:

- CD 1
- CD Player
- Musical instruments

To Do:

- Cue the CD to “Sing Aloud” (43).

Option: Provide foam noodles, bandannas, and domes if no musical instruments are available.

Provide:

- Wrapped “gift” from *Early Arriver Activity*

Provide:

- Wrapped “gift” from *Early Arrival Activity*

To Do:

- Listen to “Are You Sleeping” (2) on CD 2 to hear this tune.

Provide:

- “Activity Book, Meeting 38” (CD Item 37)
- Crayons or pencils
- Materials for the activities listed on side 2 of the activity page.
- CD 1
- CD Player

To Do:

- Cue the CD to “Sing Aloud” (43).

Tip: Allow time for the children to wash their hands as they move from messy activities.

Provide:

- “World Map” (EZ Pack Item 1)
- “Lottie Moon Pictures” (EZ Pack Item 47)
- “Invitation/Bible Verse Card” (EZ Pack Item 4)
- Crayons or washable markers
- Christmas stickers (no fantasy stickers)

To Do:

- Fill in the blanks on the invitation with information about your TeamKID meetings. Copy it and cut apart so that each child has one.
- Cut apart “Lottie Moon Pictures.”

STRETCHING

Art and Manipulatives (20–30 minutes)

All of the activities on the activity page are designed to help the children to celebrate Christ’s birth. Place the children in groups of no more than five or six with a coach at each group. Play “Sing Aloud” softly.

Activity Page, Side 1

Help the children complete the maze using a crayon or pencil. As they work, look for opportunities to review the Bible story. Talk about how far the wise men must have walked to find Jesus. Talk about how they must have traveled—by walking or on camels or donkeys—and about how we travel today.

Activity Page, Side 2

As the children work, relate the activities to the Bible story and the life application. Encourage them to give their creations as gifts to someone special. Say: “Just like the wise men, you can give gifts to celebrate Jesus’ birth.” Talk about how giving gifts to family members is a way to celebrate.

REACH OUT

Missions Emphasis Time (10–15 minutes)

Invite children to sit in the story area. Display the map. Show the picture of Lottie Moon. Comment: “Lottie Moon was a missionary to China.”

Lottie’s Letters

Charlotte Diggs Moon went to China (*indicate China on the map*) in 1873 to go tell the good news of Jesus. She shared God’s story with the Chinese people. She also wrote stories about the Chinese in letters she sent to her friends back home (*show picture of Lottie’s letters*). In these letters, Lottie Moon asked Southern Baptists to give money to support missionaries like herself around the world. At Christmas, Southern Baptist churches still collect money to support missions. Lottie Moon’s story reminds us that when we give, others can go and tell people about Jesus.

Olivia is a missionary kid who lives today in Spain. (*Show Spain on the map.*) In Spain people like to celebrate that the wise men brought gifts to Baby Jesus. Olivia and her mom make Christmas an opportunity to share the story of Jesus with neighbors. They make cookies to serve, and they invite neighbors to a piano and guitar concert. They tell the Christmas story and give the guests the *JESUS* film as a present. Their neighbors listen just like they listened to Lottie Moon in China.

—Adapted from Kim P. Davis, *A Real Christmas (September 2008)* and *KOMissions LMCO Edition 26, International Mission Board*
Give each child a copy of the TeamKID invitation. Provide Christmas stickers

and crayons for the children to use to decorate the invitations. Instruct the preschoolers to give the invitation to a friend and invite the friend to TeamKID. Say: “Just like Lottie Moon, you can tell others about Jesus.”

THE TOURNAMENT

Games and Activities (10–15 minutes)

Lead these games one at a time so all preschoolers can participate together. If you have a schedule of less than 1½ hours, you may choose just one or two of these games.

Follow the Twinkling Star

Instruct the children to stand in a circle. Choose a coach to be the *Twinkling Star*. Sing the following chant:

*Follow the star,
Follow the star,
Can you follow the star?*

The leader will then strike a pose, make a sound, or perform an action that all the children repeat. The child to the right of the leader then becomes the star, and so on. Continue playing until each child has a chance to be the star. For a more challenging game, the children must perform each of the old actions after the new one.

Gift Pass

Form groups of five or six. Guide the preschoolers to stand in a line, an arm length apart. Distribute the wrapped gifts evenly among each group. Tell the children they will pretend to give the gifts to Jesus. They must try to get all of their gifts to the front of the room as quickly as possible. Place a doll at the front of the room to represent Jesus. On your signal, they will pass the gifts through the line and stack them neatly near Baby Jesus. Play the music to start the game. To play again, challenge the children to pass the gifts in a different way: over their heads, under their legs, behind their backs, and so on. Repeat as often as it is fun. Congratulate each team for working together to pass the gifts forward.

Celebrate Jesus!

Spread the parachute on the floor and invite the children to stand around the circle. Throw small foam balls in the middle of the parachute. Tell the children that Christmas is a time of celebration. Play “Sing Aloud” while the children lift the parachute and shake the balls to celebrate of Jesus’ birth. Instruct them to try to keep all the balls on the parachute. When most of the balls have fallen off, stop the music and lower the parachute to the ground. Replace the balls on the parachute. Play the music and game again as long as time allows.

Provide:

- Wrapped “gifts” from *Early Arriver Activity*
- Doll
- CD 1
- CD Player

To Do:

- Cue the CD to “Onward Christian Soldiers/Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus”(1).

Provide:

- Parachute
- Small foam balls
- CD 1
- CD Player

To Do:

- Cue the CD to “Sing Aloud” (43).

COOL DOWN

Refreshments and Conclusion (10–15 minutes)

Provide:

- “Allergy Alert Sign” (CD Item 1)
- Parachute
- Paper towels
- Cups
- Christmas celebration cookies
- Apple juice
- CD 1
- CD Player

To Do:

- Post an allergy alert sign and check with parents before the meeting about any food allergies the preschoolers may have.
- Cue the CD to “It’s Cleanup Time” (5).

1. Review the Bible story. Place the parachute on the ground. Invite the children to sit around the edge of the parachute. Say: “Let’s review the Bible story. If you are sitting near a yellow part of the parachute, tell me something that happened in the Bible story.” If more than one child is sitting near yellow, call on each child one at a time. Continue naming colors of the parachute and asking the children to name something that happened in the Bible story. Encourage the children to name something that no one else has mentioned but do not insist that young preschoolers do it. After each child has shared something, ask the children to stand, help fold the parachute, and wash their hands for snack.

2. Pray. Sit at the tables for snack. Lead the children in a prayer. Thank God for Jesus and times of celebration. Take time to pray for each child and his family by name. Remember to thank God for the snack before closing.

3. Serve a snack. Choose helpers to pass out the napkins and cups. Serve apple juice and Christmas celebration cookies. As the children eat, invite them to share more about their own family celebrations. Ask how they celebrate birthdays and other holidays, like Easter, Thanksgiving, and Valentine’s Day. After the preschoolers have finished, ask them to throw away their trash and sit together.

4. Sing. Say: “At Christmas, one way we can celebrate is by singing Christmas carols. Let’s sing together some of my favorites.” Sing the familiar choruses of the Christmas songs “Away in a Manger,” “Silent Night,” and “We Three Kings of Orient Are.” Find the words to these songs in a hymnal or other music book if you are not familiar with them.

5. Close the meeting. Place each child’s activity items near the door. Invite the children to help clean up from the day’s activities. Play “It’s Cleanup Time.” Allow the preschoolers to unwrap the empty “presents” and throw away the wrapping paper. They can stack the unwrapped containers neatly in one area.

As the children’s parents arrive, wish each family a Merry Christmas.