

Glenview New Church Sunday Morning Program
Preschool Lessons, Phase 1 - Lesson 14
The Shepherds Come (Luke 2: 1-20)

Theme: Christmas - the Lord's Birth

I. Underlying Ideas for the Teacher

- A. The baby Jesus is God born on earth.
- B. The Lord was born at night when it was dark, representing the ignorance at the time.
- C. If the Lord had not come into the world, mankind would have destroyed itself.
- D. The Lord came into the world to teach people how to be good.
- E. God is Jesus' father (His own father).
- F. The Lord's coming was the most important thing that ever happened.
- G. The shepherds welcomed the angel's news of the Lord's birth because they were kind and good. The shepherds represent those who cherish innocence.

II. Story Circle

A. Introduce the Story

- 1. Long ago, the Lord was born a tiny baby on the earth. When you were born a tiny baby it was the beginning of you. But this was not the beginning of the Lord. He was born on the earth so that He could help people in a different way from how he had helped them before. People needed to see the Lord and hear Him talk to them, telling them how to be good. So the Lord came to earth as a tiny baby.
- 2. Do you remember who the Lord's mother was? Mary, that's right. Mary learned that she would be the mother of Jesus from the angel, Gabriel. Mary had promised to marry a man named Joseph, but they weren't married yet. They were living in Galilee, but they had to travel to Bethlehem. And while they were in Bethlehem, the baby Jesus was born. Let's hear the story now. Listen and see if you can tell me who were the first people to visit the baby Lord.

B. Tell/Read the Story and Ideas to Discuss

- 1. Read or tell the story from Luke 2:6-7.
 - a. Do you know what a stable is? (A place where animals live.)
 - b. The baby Lord was born in a stable because there was no room at the inn. (An inn is like a motel.)
 - c. What was the baby wrapped in? (Swaddling cloths—long strips of cloth wrapped around and around the baby.)

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- d. What is a manger? (A wooden box for food or hay for the animals to eat.)
- e. Can you say with me, "And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger"?

2. Read or tell the story from Luke 2:8-14.

- a. Why were the shepherds out in the fields that night? (They were taking care of their sheep and lambs, keeping them safe from wild animals.)
- b. What did the shepherds see? (They saw an angel who shone with a bright light.)
- c. What did the angel tell the shepherds? (That the baby Lord was born this day!)
- d. And then there were many angels praising the Lord. Can you say with me, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men!"

(Activity: Pretend to be the shepherds watching over their flock by night. See III-B-1 below.)

3. Read or tell the story from Luke 2:15-16, 20.

- a. The shepherds wanted to go to Bethlehem and see the baby Lord. They hurried to find Him. Who did they see along with the baby? (Mary and Joseph. Joseph was not the Lord's father, but he helped Mary take care of the baby.)
- b. What did the shepherds do when they had seen the Lord? (They told many people the wonderful news. Then they went back to the fields, praising the Lord for all they had seen and heard.)

(Activity: Pretend to be the shepherds looking for the baby Lord lying in a manger. See III-B-2 below)

C. Further Ideas

Do you know why the shepherds were the first people to hear the wonderful news about the baby Lord? It was because they were kind and good. They believed what the angel told them, and they hurried to go see the baby.

III. Enrichment Activities

A. Music

1. "Away In a Manger," *Hymnal* #206.
2. During the project and play periods, play the "Wee Sing for Christmas" tape, using the section of religious songs.

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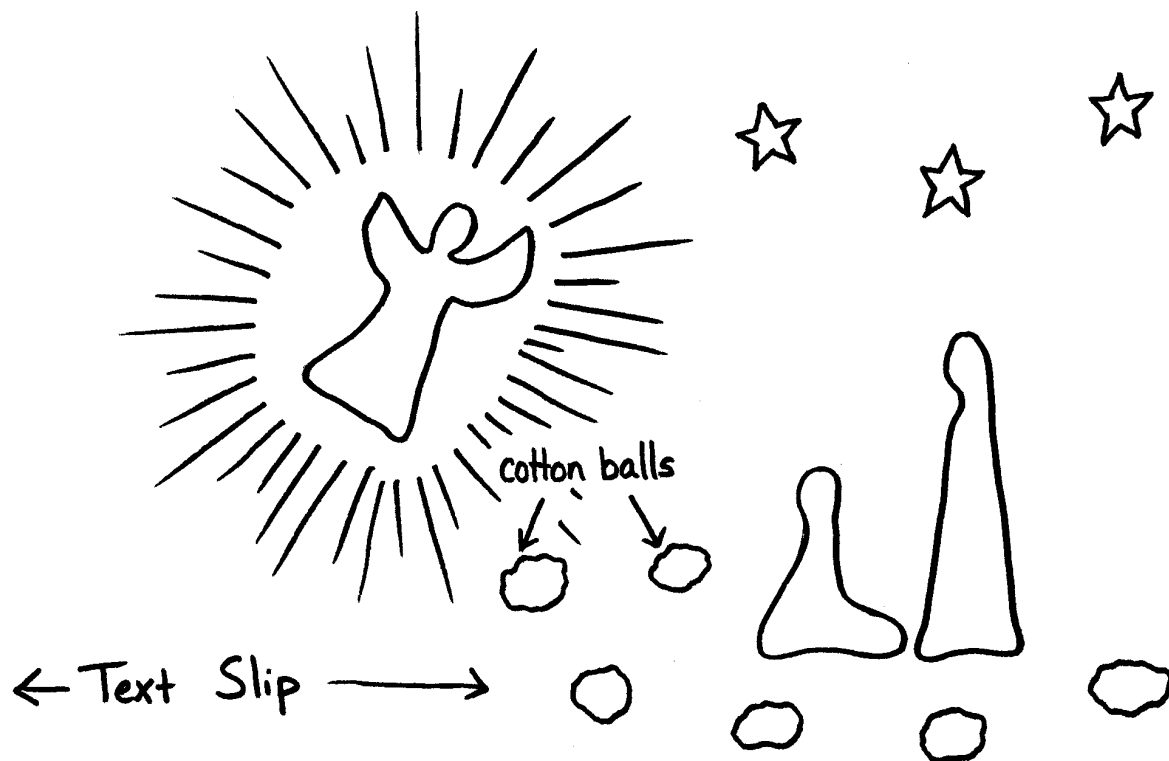
B. Activities

1. Pretend to be the shepherds watching over their flock by night.
 - a. Sit down with your sheep. It is nighttime. It is dark all around us.
 - b. Keep your lambs safe.
 - c. Look! What's that up in the heavens? A beautiful, bright angel! We cover our eyes because the angel's light is so bright.
 - d. The angel tells us not to be afraid so we uncover our eyes. We are very happy to hear about the birth of the Lord this day.
2. Pretend to be the shepherds looking for the baby Lord lying in a manger.
 - a. (Teacher sets up a nativity scene in the room or elsewhere before class.)
 - b. Walk to Bethlehem, and then look for the stable where the baby Lord is lying in a manger.
 - c. When you find the baby, kneel and sing together, "Away In a Manger."

C. Project: A Collage of the Angel Appearing to the Shepherds

1. Give each child a piece of 12 X 18 black construction paper for the background.
2. Children glue precut white angel and two shepherd figures (silhouettes are fine) to the background.
3. Give each child about seven cotton balls to glue around the shepherds as the sheep and lambs.
4. Glue silver glitter around the angel, and place some silver stars in the night sky.
5. Add a text slip: "You will find the Babe lying in a manger."

Example:



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IV. Teaching Aids

- A. Pictures of the nativity and the shepherds in the LIFE OF JESUS flip chart.
- B. Picture books of the Christmas story such as *A Child Is Born*, adapted by Elizabeth Winthrop and illustrated by Charles Mikolaycak; and *The Christ Child* Illustrated by Maud and Miska Petersham.
- C. Flannel board with nativity figures.
- D. A set of nativity figures that the children may handle.
- E. A special nativity for them to search for as they pretend to be shepherds.
- F. Stuffed lambs.

V. Further Reading for the Teacher

- A. Dole's *Bible Study Notes*, Vol. 5, pp. 197-211.

Text Slips for the Project

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