

Rhythms of Grace Worship •Christmas Year 3

Theme: Christmas: And the Word
was made flesh

Scripture: John 1:1-18, Luke 2:1-20

Date: _____

Location: _____

Volunteer Roles:

Facilitator _____

Storyteller _____

Celebrant _____

Center Leader _____

Guide _____

Items needed for this Session

Gathering: 11 X 17 in. pieces of cardboard create stencils for the letters J,E,S,and U, banner to spell the name Jesus with the stencils, markers or crayons, pencils for tracing

Storytelling: Bible, Jesus doll, Storytelling Pages, banner, baby doll, and story cards

Response Activities:

Word tiles- Scrabble ©, Bananagram © tiles or like handmade tiles

Coloring- reproduce (slightly smaller) the story cards, crayons or colored pencils

Nativity Set- nativity set, labels for each figure on index size cards

Word Walk- separate pieces of construction paper with titles of categories listed on each i.e. animals, food, cities, colors, etc.

Regathering: Stick-on name tags for each participant, *Jesu, Jesu*, elements for the Eucharistic table (see Eucharist-Book 1)

Eucharist: altar table and elements (pita bread/rice crackers, juice, chalice, paten, purificator, corporal, altar cloth), Eucharistic Prayer (see Book 1 p. 100), *Gather our Hearts* song lyrics (see book 1 p. 99)

Dismissal: *Jesus Loves Me* song lyrics (see Book 1 p. 99 and CD Yr. 2 additional resources)

Sessions Plan • Christmas • Yr. 3

Gathering: Using the 11 X 17 stencils participants trace and color a banner that says, “Jesus.” Allow them to arrange the stencils in the proper order to spell out the name and to color in the letters once they are traced. Place the banner in the storytelling circle.

Storytelling: With the Bible, Jesus doll, Storytelling page, tell the story of the annunciation and birth of Jesus, the Word, using the banner, a baby doll and story cards provided.

Response Activities:

Word tiles- Using the letter tiles see how many words participants can create on the tabletop. More difficult: try to interlock words, as in a Scrabble© game.

Coloring- Participants add color to reproduced story cards using crayons or colored pencils.

Optional- Play a sequencing game with the cards.

Nativity Set- Using a nativity set, created labels invite participants to tape the correct label onto each figure.

Word Walk- Lay the prepared construction paper with category titles on them out on the floor in a path. As participants walk the path, have them name out loud something that fits each category before stepping onto the next piece of paper. For example, when stepping on a sheet marked “Animals,” the participant might say “Dog,” and then step onto the next sheet marked “Food,” and say “ice Cream”, etc. Repeat until the path is completed.

Regathering: With the stick-on name tags for each participant on the floor in the center of a circle, gather around the name tags and invite each person, one by one, to find their name tag, put it on and say, “God made me. I am _____(name.)” Singing *Jesu, Jesu*, participants pick up an element for placement at the altar, and as the clergy sets the table all create a circle around the altar.

Eucharist: Sing: *Gather our Hearts*
Gather our hearts, oh God
Gather our thoughts, oh God
Bring us together around you

Celebration of the Eucharist

Dismissal: All sing and sign *Jesus Loves Me*
Celebrant provides the blessing:
Celebrant: “*Go in Peace to love and serve the Lord*”
Participant: “*Thanks be to God!*”

Storytelling • Christmas •Yr. 3

Place the Bible and Jesus doll by the Storyteller.

Also have the 6 Christmas story cards, a baby doll and the “Jesus” banner from the Gathering at the ready.

Our story today is from the Bible, (*show the Bible*) our book that tells the stories of God and God’s people, of Jesus (*show Jesus doll*), God’s son, and of how much God loves us (*place hands over heart*).

This story begins a long, long, long time ago. It begins before you were born...before I was born...before this place (*motion to your surroundings and name the place, i.e. Church hall, chapel, sanctuary, etc.*) was built...even before the whole world was made!

This story begins at the beginning of time when all there was, was God.

God had an idea, the, that the world should be made. And so God created the world. But even then, God had a partner: Jesus. Jesus wasn’t a person yet, but an idea. And God called this Jesus idea, “The Word.” Jesus’ name was “Jesus,” (*point to banner*) and he was the way that God’s Word was heard in the world.

After God made the world with trees and oceans and plants and animals and people, God decided that it was time for Jesus, the Word, to come to the world.

And so God sent Jesus...but he didn’t look like this (*hold up the Jesus doll*), but like this: (*hold up the baby doll*.) Jesus, the word, started out just like you and I...as a baby. Jesus came as a baby, and Jesus was God’s Word.

Jesus was God.

Continue with the story cards and baby doll.....

Let's listen to the story of Jesus coming to be with us.

(Story card 1) Jesus' mom was a young teenage girl named Mary. One day an angel came to her and told her that she would have a baby. The angel was strong and sure. And it was a surprise for Mary. But the Angel told her not to be afraid, that this was God's good idea. And so, Mary said, "Okay."

(Story card 2) After the angel came to Mary, she and her husband Joseph had to travel to the town of Bethlehem. Jesus was growing inside of Mary and it was a long journey. So they took a donkey, and Mary got to ride and rest.

(Story card 3) When they got to Bethlehem, the town was very, very busy. Many people had come to the town at the same time and there was nowhere to sleep. Joseph and Mary were tired from their journey and so they were given the last place in town to sleep- in the barn with the animals. They were grateful to have a place to rest.

(Story card 4) While they were in the barn, it came time for Mary to have her baby. God's great idea- Jesus, the Word- was going to be born! Mary's baby was born in the barn next to the horses and cows in the middle of the night.

(Story card 5) This good idea of God-Jesus, the Word- was too good to keep a secret. And so angels flew out to shepherds who were watching their sheep in the fields and told them the great news: Jesus was born! God brought God's Word to earth! Come and See! The shepherds were startled...and they were curious...

(Story card 6)...and so they followed the angels back to Bethlehem to see. And, yes, there was Jesus, in the barn, lying in a manger. The shepherds knew that this baby, Jesus, was special. They knew that through Jesus, God's Word would be heard. And they knew, that Jesus, the Word, was God.

Amen.

After an appropriate pause, the Storyteller goes to explain the activities of the day.