



# THE BIRTH OF JESUS

Luke 2:1-20

## Memory Verse

**'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.'** Luke 1:10-11

## Context/Background

Luke is the only gospel writer who related the events he recorded to world history. His account was addressed to a predominantly Greek audience that would have been interested in, and familiar with, the political situation. Palestine was under the rule of the Roman empire. Emperor Caesar Augustus, the first Roman emperor, was in charge. The Roman rulers, considered to be like gods, stood in contrast to the tiny baby in a manger who was God in the flesh. A Roman census was taken, and the government forced Joseph to make a long trip just to pay his taxes. Joseph and Mary were both descendants of David. The Old Testament is full of prophecies that the Messiah would be born in David's royal line. For ages the Jews had waited for the Messiah to be born.

## Summary

Mary and Joseph had to travel to Bethlehem because of an order from the Roman emperor that a census, or record, of all people be taken in their hometown. After traveling on a donkey for several days, Mary and Joseph arrived in Bethlehem and were told there were no places to stay. The inns were full. Seeing that Mary was due to give birth at any moment, an inn owner told Joseph they could stay in his stable. Mary went into labour, and Jesus was born in the stable. The only place for the sleeping baby to rest was most likely in the animals' trough, known as the manger. During this time, an angel appeared to shepherds who were watching their flocks in the fields near Bethlehem. The angel told them the good news of the birth of the Savior and Messiah, Jesus Christ. The shepherds immediately went to find baby Jesus, who the angels told them they would find sleeping in the manger. Then they ran off to share the good news with everyone.

## Relevance/Application

**Themes: love, justice, compassion, humility, hope, caring, community, peace**

## Younger students:

- Christmas celebrates the birth of Jesus, our Saviour. God loves us so much that he gave us his one and only son, Jesus.
- Jesus became human to show us God's love
- We give gifts to one another to be reminded and to share in this love.
- Jesus is the greatest gift
- We should share this gift of good news with everyone.

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**Older students:**

- The good news about Jesus is that he comes to all, including the plain and ordinary (like the shepherds). He comes to anyone with a heart humble enough to accept him.
- Jesus' birth happened the way it did to fulfil the prophecies and God's promises throughout the Old Testament. God always had a plan to rescue us from our sin and darkness.

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**Christian Studies Framework****Christian Beliefs****Key Idea 2 The person and work of Jesus the Christ is central to Christianity**

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**Catechism Connections**

In the Apostles' Creed we say: *I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary...*

I believe that Jesus Christ is my Lord. He is truly God. He has always been the Son of the Father. He is also a real human being, the Virgin Mary's Son.

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**Discussion/Wondering Questions:****Early Years**

- What do you want for Christmas?
- How hard is it to wait?
- How excited are you going to be when you open your gifts?
- Who has a Christmas tree in their house? Do you decorate it? What do you put on it?

**Primary**

- What is your favourite thing about Christmas?
- What do you know about your own birth, or the births of others in your family?
- Is it hard to wait for your presents? Imagine how the Jewish people felt when they were waiting for a Messiah/Saviour to come. They had been waiting for hundreds of years.

**Secondary**

- What is a piece of good news you remember receiving? How did you react?
- In what ways is Jesus' birth good news for you? What will be your response this Christmas?
- Compare Luke's account with Matthew 1:18-25. What differences are there? What stands out to you in each account?

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**Images or objects to spark discussion**

- An empty manger
- A nativity set
- A shepherd's crook

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**Telling the Story**

**Bibles:** The Beginner's Bible  
The Big Rescue Bible  
The NIV Bible

The Jesus Storybook Bible - He's Here! The Nativity  
The Light of the Whole World - The Story of the Shepherds

**Creative Storytelling:** Act out the nativity. Make costumes or figurines and spend time imagining what it would be like to be each character in this story.

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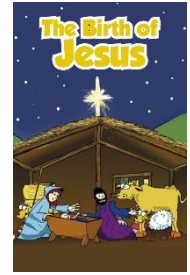
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## Tracts and Other Resources

Lutheran Tract Mission

[That First Christmas](#) – tract with all the Bible texts for Christmas

[The Birth of Jesus](#) – tract and activity books for different ages



GROW Ministries

[GROW Kids CHRISTMAS DAY \(A\)](#)

## Audio Stories/Podcasts

Bible.is - <https://www.faithcomesbyhearing.com/audio-bible-resources/bible-is>

Audio recordings of the Bible in many different languages and several English translations. All four gospels also available in film versions, searchable by book and chapter. Excellent resource for NESB learners.

Kids Corner – Bible Stories – [The Shepherds](#)

## Videos: Early Years / Junior Primary

[The Story of Christmas \(Jesus is Born\)- Saddleback Kids](#)

["Light of the Whole World" - The Jesus Storybook Bible, Sally Lloyd-Jones](#)

## Middle – Upper Primary

[Jesus is Born Luke 2:1-20 - Saddleback Kids](#)

[God's Story: Jesus is Born - Crossroads Kids' Club](#)

## Secondary/Staff

[The Birth of Jesus: Luke 1-2 - BibleProject](#)

[Gospel Of Luke Chapter 2:1-21- LUMO](#)

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## Invocation

Do not be afraid; for see – I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people:

**to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord.**

This will be a sign for you:

**you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.** (Luke 2:10-12 NRSV)

Today we come to worship filled with glad tidings of great joy.

We come with open hearts to receive the good news from God

We welcome Jesus, our Saviour and King.

May the Holy Spirit draw us closer to the manger today, and send us out bursting to tell the good news of God's love to the whole world.

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## Prayers

### Prayer

Dear Jesus, thank you for being the best Christmas present we could ever receive. Thank you for being with us every day of our lives. Amen.

OR

Lord Jesus, thank you for being born a baby in Bethlehem.

Help us always to give glory and praise to God.

Amen.

OR

Lord Jesus, child of Bethlehem,

Come and be King in our hearts. Amen.

OR

Lord, help us to take the angel's message to heart, and to realise that the birth of Jesus our Saviour

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is good news for us and for all people.  
Lead us to give glory to you  
by a life of joyful service  
to you and to other people.  
Amen.

**Mealtime Prayer**

God, we join in celebration of the gift of Jesus our Saviour. Bless our meal. Fill us with Christmas joy, love and peace. Amen.

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**Blessing**

Christ the Son of God give you joy and peace by his presence with you; and the blessing of almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be with you always.  
Amen.

*Encourage participants to bless each other, using the following words (or you can make up your own).*

(Name), know that Jesus was born for you.

May God's peace  
and favour rest  
on you this day  
and always. Amen

OR sing AT 194 The Christmas Blessing (Aub Podlich, Robin Mann)

May the feet of God walk with you  
And His hand hold you tight  
May the eye of God rest on you  
And His ear hear your cry  
May the smile of God be for you  
And His breath give you life  
May the Child of God grow in you  
And His love bring you home.

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**Music**

Christmas carols which focus on the birth of Jesus:

Joy to the World (Lutheran Hymnal 627) OR [Joy To The World \(Unspeakable Joy\) – Chris Tomlin](#) OR [Joy To The World - Emu Music](#)

Away in a Manger (Lutheran Hymnal 634) OR [Away In A Manger \(Forever Amen\) – Phil Wickham](#)

Once in Royal David's City (Lutheran Hymnal 632)

O Come All Ye Faithful (Lutheran Hymnal 34)

Silent Night (Lutheran Hymnal 629)

[On That Very First Christmas - Colin Buchanan](#)

[Christ the King of Christmas - Colin Buchanan](#)

[Saviour In a Manger - Emu Music](#)

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**Activities**

**Early Years:**

- Make a Christmas star ornament. Remind the children that Jesus is the real star of Christmas.

**Primary:**

- Act out the nativity. Imagine what each character might have felt that first Christmas.

**Upper Primary/Secondary:**

- Plan something to bless the poor, hungry or lonely this Christmas. Make up Christmas hampers for local care agencies, raise money to support charities
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who care for the homeless at Christmas or bake treats for the residents of your local aged care home – and visit the elderly to deliver them.

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