

# Waiting in prayer with Zechariah

**Verse:**

Luke 1:5-20

Zechariah and Elizabeth

**Aim:**

To understand that praying comes with waiting



In today's session we meet Zechariah and Elizabeth.

For many years they had prayed for God to give them a very special gift. After years of waiting, their prayers were finally answered. Their son, John, would prepare the way for Jesus. Waiting for God to answer our prayers can be challenging, but it's important to remember that he isn't our heavenly Father Christmas ticking prayers off a gift list. As followers of Jesus we are part of a much bigger purpose on this earth, and sometimes we need to wait a while for our prayers to be answered.

## Each child will need:

- Memory verse wristband
- Pens/pencils and paper
- Resources to create an Advent wreath – see Action It
- Explore It Ideas handout

## You will need:

- Memory verse poster
- To create Advent wreaths for any child absent for this session (optional)



## Start it

Ask the children to think of a well-known children's film or cartoon character. Make sure they don't tell anyone else who it is. Give the children a couple of minutes to write a Christmas list for that character, a list of presents their character would love to receive. Ask the children to read out their list and see if the others can guess the character it is for.

## Ask:

- Have you written your own Christmas list yet?
- What one item are you really hoping to receive this Christmas?

## Say:

In our Bible story today Zechariah and Elizabeth had been waiting a very long time for a precious gift. Rather than asking Father Christmas to leave the gift under the tree, this elderly couple had been praying to God for many years.



## Sing it

## Say:

Our memory verse for this month is extra challenging as it is two verses! We know you can meet the challenge, especially when the memory verse reminds us of good news.

Display the memory verse, read it through together and, if it helps the group, create actions to help them to remember it.

## Memory verse

**‘The angel said to them, “Don’t be afraid, because I am bringing you some good news. It will be a joy to all the people. Today your Saviour was born in David’s town. He is Christ, the Lord.”’**

(Luke 2:10-11 *ICB*)

## Say:

These two small verses from Luke chapter two brought the world a huge message of good news. Our song for today reminds us about the good news of Jesus Christ.

## Song

**‘Good News’ (official lyric video)** by Vineyard Kids (2:14)



## Tell it

## Ask:

Is there something you have been praying for? If you feel comfortable, then share with the group what it is.

- How long have you prayed about it?
- How long would you be willing to pray about it?
- Would you keep praying for five, ten, fifteen years? What about if it was more than that?

## Say:

In our story today we meet an elderly couple who had been praying for a child for many, many years. They thought that they would never be able to have a son or daughter, but God had different plans.

## Read:

**‘During the time Herod ruled Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah. He belonged to Abijah’s group [a group of Jewish priests]. Zechariah’s wife came from the family of Aaron. Her name was Elizabeth. Zechariah and Elizabeth truly did what God said was good. They did everything the Lord commanded and told people to do. They were without fault in keeping his law. But Zechariah and Elizabeth had no children. Elizabeth could not have a baby; and both of them were very old.**

(Luke 1:5-7 ICB)

## Say:

Zechariah and Elizabeth loved God very much and trusted him with their future. They had prayed for many years to have a child, but now, due to their age, it seemed like having their own children was not going to be part of their lives. Zechariah was carrying out his duty in the Temple when this happened ...

## Video

*Gabriel visits Zechariah* by Superbook (1:27)

## Ask:

How would you feel if an angel like Gabriel came to visit you?

## Say:

It’s easy to understand why Zechariah felt confused and frightened, but the angel told him not to be afraid.

## Ask:

- What message did the angel Gabriel bring to Zechariah?
- Why did the angel silence Zechariah?

## Say:

As a priest, Zechariah would have been used to having plenty to say, but now he needed to wait quietly for the arrival of his son. God had answered his prayers, but not quite in the way that Zechariah expected.

## Ask:

- Have you ever had to wait for God to answer your prayers? What did it feel like when he did that?
- Why do you think God sometimes makes us wait before he answers our prayers?



## Say:

We need to be careful not to think of God as our heavenly Father Christmas, ticking off the prayers on our list like presents under the tree. God is not watching to see if we are being naughty or nice before he decides about our prayers. He loves us and wants to answer the prayers of his children.

## Say:

God is a real, loving heavenly Father who has a purpose for our lives. He has a much wider perspective than we can ever imagine; and sometimes, just like Zechariah, he needs us to wait for this to be fulfilled.

## Action it

### Ask:

What is Advent?

### Video

**What is Advent?** by Twinkl Educational Publishing (2:28)

Stop the clip at 1:15. (... and of course the fifth and final candle represents Jesus.)



## Advent wreath

The aim is for the children to make an Advent wreath that they can add to each week. Today they will make the wreath and the first candle to take home. Over the next few weeks the other candles will be created as part of the Pray It section, to add to their wreath at home. In the final week there is an option of providing an electric tea light.

You may wish to make a few extra wreaths for children who are unable to join the first session.

There are many different ways that Advent wreaths can be created, and a list of links for resources is provided below.

- **Kids' Advent wreath (3D with paper plate version)** by [looktohimandberadiant.com](http://looktohimandberadiant.com)
- **Hope and Love Advent wreath (hanging paper wreath)** by [bakerross.co.uk](http://bakerross.co.uk)
- **3-D printable Advent wreath (3D paper version)** by [drawn2bcreative.com](http://drawn2bcreative.com)

## Pray it

For the next few weeks during Pray It the children will create a candle linked to the relevant Advent theme. Whichever method you use, the Advent candle for this week needs to include the word 'Hope'.

## Say:

Our Advent prayer theme for this week is 'Hope'. The angel Gabriel brought a message of hope to Zechariah. After they had spent years praying, God promised that Zechariah and Elizabeth would have a son who would prepare the way for Jesus.

## Say:

Sometimes when we look at the world around us, it can seem like there is little hope. God sent his son at Christmas to remind us that in Jesus there is always hope.

Give the children time to complete their Hope candle and attach it to their wreath. Ask the children to share what they hope will happen in the future. These hopes could be for their family or friends, or for the wider world. As they hold their Advent wreaths, incorporate their hopes into a prayer. An optional song is provided to bring the session to a close.

## Song

'Hope' Kids Worship Song by Allstars Kids Club (3:50)

## Explore it

Remember to send home the *Explore It Ideas* for children and families.



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'Explore It!' is produced by the Children and Youth Department in collaboration with Kay Moorby (soulwithaiew)

## Waiting in prayer with Zechariah

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.



**Verse:**  
Luke 1:5-20  
Zechariah and Elizabeth



**Aim:**  
To understand that praying comes with waiting



### Pray

Find a special place at home for your Advent wreath. Each day, take time to ask God to fulfil the hopes he has for you, your family, your wider community and the world.



### Share

Show the people at home the Advent wreath you created in your Explore It session today. Each week you will be able to add a new candle to your wreath and share the theme with your loved ones. This week the Advent theme is hope. Watch this clip together.

**Advent for Kids: HOPE (Week 1) – 5 Minute Family Devotional/ Kids Bible Story** by Minno Bible Stories for Kids



### Song for the week

'Good News' (official lyric video) by Vineyard Kids



### Memory verse

'The angel said to them, "Don't be afraid, because I am bringing you some good news. It will be a joy to all the people. Today your Saviour was born in David's town. He is Christ the Lord.'"

(Luke 2:10-11 /CB)

LIVING  
OUT FAITH

Today's story is illustrated in this week's *Kids Alive!* The UK's only weekly Christian comic – filled with jokes, competitions, Bible-based cartoons and much more...and is now available to read online!

[salvationarmy.org.uk/kidsalive](http://salvationarmy.org.uk/kidsalive).



Children  
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# Breaking from tradition



**Verse:**

Luke 1:26-38,57-64  
The Virgin Mary



**Aim:**

To know that trusting God might mean doing things differently

There are lots of times in our lives when we feel afraid, but God reassures us that he is always with us.

In our Bible stories today, the characters had to break away from what was expected of them. They knew that others would not necessarily agree with their choices, but they also understood that trusting God meant they needed to do things differently.

### Each child will need:

- Pens/pencils and paper
- Explore It Ideas handout

### You will need:

- Card and craft materials
- Material to create the 'Peace' candle (this will depend on the method you chose for your group)



## Start it

The aim of today's activity is to encourage the children and give them an opportunity to share and discuss what they are afraid of. A clip is provided as a discussion starter. Throughout the session, there will be opportunities to reinforce that God tells us we do not need to be afraid and that we can trust him in any situation we face.

### Video

*100 Kids Tell Us Their Fears/100 Kids* by HiHo Kids

## Sing it

### Say:

Our memory verse for this month reminds us of the amazing message of good news brought to everyone by the angels. Let's share it together.

### Memory verse

**'The angel said to them, "Don't be afraid, because I am bringing you some good news. It will be a joy to all the people. Today your Saviour was born in David's town. He is Christ the Lord."'**

(Luke 2:10-11 *ICB*)

### Say:

The song for today is based around Luke 2:10-11 and should help us to learn our memory verse.



### Video

*Motions (Luke 2:10-11)* by Saddleback Kids (2:28)

## Tell it

### Say:

As we discovered in the Start It activity, we are all afraid of different things. It may be spiders, snakes, heights – or even bananas! We may be afraid of what other people think. Throughout the Christmas story, there are many characters asked to do things that would make them feel afraid. Each time God reassured them that there was nothing to fear.

### Video

*An Angel Visits Mary / Birth of Jesus (Part 1/3)* by Christmas Story for Kids (stop clip at 3:00)

### Ask:

Mary was engaged but wasn't married to Joseph. Why was the angel's news that Mary would have a baby such a scary idea?

### Say:

The rules about marriage were very strict in the time of Mary and Joseph. Mary could have been very afraid of what others would think of her. She may have been afraid of even losing Joseph as her future husband.



**Ask:**

- What did the angel say would happen to Mary?
- How did he reassure her that everything would be OK?

**Say:**

Instead of being filled with fear, Mary trusted God. We find her answer to God's request in Luke 1:35-38. We also get an update on the story of Elizabeth and Zechariah who we met last week.

**Read:**

'The angel said to Mary, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will cover you. The baby will be holy. He will be called the Son of God. Now listen! Elizabeth, your relative, is very old. But she is also pregnant with a son. Everyone thought she could not have a baby, but she has been pregnant for six months. God can do everything!" Mary said, "I am the servant girl of the Lord. Let this happen to me as you say!" Then the angel went away.'

(Luke 1:35-38 *ICB*)

**Ask:**

How do you think the news about Elizabeth and her baby gave Mary the confidence to trust in God?

**Say:**

Sometimes when we feel afraid about the future, it can help to look around at the lives of other people who believe in Jesus. We can see how God has answered their prayers and this can help us to trust him more ourselves.

God's faithfulness to Elizabeth helped Mary to trust God for the future.

**Read:**

'When it was time for Elizabeth to give birth, she had a boy. Her neighbours and relatives heard how good the Lord was to her, and they rejoiced. When the baby was eight days old, they came to circumcise him. They wanted to name him Zechariah because this was his father's name. But his mother said, "No! He will be named John." The people said to Elizabeth, "But no one in your family has this name!" Then they made signs to his father, "What would you like to name him?" Zechariah asked for something to write on. Then he wrote, "His name is John." Everyone was surprised. Then Zechariah could talk again. He began to praise God.'

(Luke 1:57-64 *ICB*)

**Ask:**

- What name was everyone expecting Elizabeth and Zechariah to give their baby boy?
- What did they do instead?



## Say:

Sometimes God asks us to do things that others might not expect. He asks us to trust him as we do things differently. We don't need to be afraid, as he is with us and 'God can do everything'. (Luke 1:37 ICB)

## Action it

Today's activity gives the children an opportunity to get creative. Remind the children of the angel's words to Mary: 'God can do everything!' (Luke 1:37 ICB). Give the children a selection of art materials and card. Ask them to create a Christmas card using this verse as their inspiration. Discuss with the children who they could send these cards to. Who needs to hear the message that God can do everything?

When the children have completed their cards, they can share them with the rest of the group and make a final decision on who they will send their card to.

## Pray it

In the Action It section of the first session the children made the base for their Advent wreath and completed the first candle as part of the Pray It section. In today's session you will need to prepare the resources for the children to make their 'Peace' candle.

## Say:

Our Advent prayer theme for this week is 'Peace'.

## Ask:

What do you think of when you hear the word 'peace'?

## Say:

This Christmas there are lots of places in the world that are experiencing conflict. Disagreements between countries lead to war and people try and show their power over others. This is not what God wants for our world. He wants peace between everyone.

Our Advent wreath for this week reminds us of the peace that Jesus can bring to our hearts. Peace starts with us. As you make your Advent candle for this week, think about the situations at home and at school where you could bring peace.

After the children have completed their candle, encourage them to share where they can bring peace to situations in their everyday lives. Explain to the children how they can ask God for guidance as they try and show his peace to their friends and family. An optional song of peace is provided to bring the session to a close.

## Video

'Glory (Let There Be Peace)' Official Lyric Video by Matt Maher

## Explore it

Remember to send home the *Explore It Ideas* for children and families.



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'Explore It!' is produced by the Children and Youth Department in collaboration with Kay Moorby (soulwithaview)

## Breaking from tradition

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.



### Verse:

Luke 1:26-38,57-64  
The Virgin Mary



### Aim:

To know that trusting God might mean doing things differently



### Encourage

In today's session you created a very special Christmas card. It reminded us that 'God can do everything' (Luke 1:37 *ICB*). Give the card to the special person you thought of during the session and say a short prayer for them each night this week before you go to sleep.



### Share

In your Explore It Session this week you created a new candle for your Advent wreath representing the message of God's peace at Christmas. Add the candle to your wreath and then watch the following clip with loved ones at home.

**Advent for Kids: PEACE (Week 2) - 5 Minute Family Devotional/Kids Bible Story (5:41)** by Minno Bible Stories for Kids



### Song for the week

**Motions (Luke 2:10-11)** by Saddleback Kids (2:28)



### Memory verse

'The angel said to them, "Don't be afraid, because I am bringing you some good news. It will be a joy to all the people. Today your Saviour was born in David's town. He is Christ the Lord."'

(Luke 2:10-11 *ICB*)

**LIVING  
OUT FAITH**

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Children  
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# The Holy Spirit shows that God is with us

**Verse:**

Luke 2:1-7; Matthew 1:18-25  
The birth of Jesus

**Aim:**

To learn how the Holy Spirit was crucial to the Christmas story



When we hear the Christmas story, we don't usually spend much time thinking about the Holy Spirit.

In today's session we will spend time thinking about the crucial role that the Holy Spirit played in the birth of Jesus. We will also discover who the Holy Spirit is and the part that he plays in our lives today.

## Each child will need:

- Pens/pencils and paper
- Explore It Ideas handout

## You will need:

- Paper and felt-tip pens
- Material to create the 'Joy' candle (this will depend on the method chosen for your group)



## Start it

Our Start It activity for today is full of festive sounds. Play the clip for the children and see how many sounds they can guess. You do not need to complete all 24 sounds and can stop the clip at any point. We would suggest that you only guess the first ten sounds.

After the children have completed the quiz, discuss with them how they knew what sound it was when they could not see what was making the sound. Explain that sometimes we can hear the sound of something, without being able to see what is creating the noise.

## Video

*Guess the Christmas Sound Game - 24 Festive Sounds Quiz* by Mister Teach (8:05)

## Sing it

### Say:

Today we are going to learn all about the Holy Spirit. Here's a fun song to remind us of who the Holy Spirit is and how he helps us to live our lives as followers of Jesus.

## Video

*Holy Spirit for Children - Christian Songs for Kids* by Aji and friends (3:28)

## Tell it

### Say:

The Holy Spirit plays an important part in the Christmas story.

### Ask:

Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

### Say:

Let's watch the clip to find out more about the Holy Spirit.

## Video

*What is the Holy Spirit? A Sunday School lesson for kids!* by Douglas Talks (stop clip: 3:46)

### Ask:

Now that you have watched the clip, how would you describe the Holy Spirit and what he does?

### Say:

Now that we have a better understanding of who the Holy Spirit is and what he does, we can discover and understand the part he plays in the Christmas story.

### Read:

**'The mother of Jesus Christ was Mary. And this is how the birth of Jesus came about. Mary was engaged to marry Joseph. But before they married, she learned that she was going to have a baby. She was pregnant by the power of the Holy Spirit. Mary's husband, Joseph, was a good man. He did not want to disgrace her in public, so he planned to divorce her secretly. While Joseph thought about this, an angel of the Lord came to him in a dream. The angel said, "Joseph, descendant of David, don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife. The baby in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son. You will name the son Jesus. Give him that name because he will save his people from their sins." All this happened to make clear the full meaning of what the Lord had said through the prophet: "The virgin will be pregnant. She will have a son, and they will name him**



**Immanuel.” This name means “God is with us”.’**

(Matthew 1:18–23 *ICB*)

**Ask:**

- What part did the Holy Spirit play in the birth of Jesus?
- What was the special meaning of the name given to Jesus?

**Say:**

Through the Holy Spirit, God fulfils his promise to always be with us.

## Action it

Explain to the children that different parts of the Christmas story are mainly told in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. Having already listened to part of the Christmas story in the Gospel of Matthew, read Luke 2:1–7 to the children. Once you have done this, list the key parts of the story and any tricky names that the children need to remember. Encourage the children to create a comic strip or storyboard version that they could share with someone who does not know the Christmas story.

**Read:**

**‘At that time, Augustus Caesar sent an order to all people in the countries that were under Roman rule. The order said that they must list their names in a register. This was the first registration taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. And everyone went to their own towns to be registered. So Joseph left Nazareth, a town in Galilee. He went to the town of Bethlehem in Judea. This town was known as the town of David. Joseph went there because he was from the family of David. Joseph registered with Mary because she was engaged to marry him. (Mary was now pregnant.) While Joseph and Mary were in Bethlehem, the time came for her to have the baby. She gave birth to her first son. There were no rooms left in the inn. So she wrapped the baby with cloths and laid him in a box where animals are fed.’**

(Luke 2:1–7 *ICB*)

**Say:**

The message of the good news of Jesus shines through the Christmas story. Let’s share our memory verse for this month to remind us of its message.

## Memory verse

**‘The angel said to them, “Don’t be afraid, because I am bringing you some good news. It will be a joy to all the people. Today your Saviour was born in David’s town. He is Christ the Lord.”’**

(Luke 2:10–11 *ICB*)

## Pray it

In today's session you will need to prepare the resources for the children to make their 'Joy' candle.

### **Say:**

Our Advent prayer theme for this week is 'joy'.

### **Ask:**

What fills your heart with joy?

### **Say:**

In the third week of Advent, our candle reminds us of the amazing joy brought to the world through the birth of Jesus.

After the children have completed their candle, watch the clip together which shares the message of joy brought to the world at Christmas.

## **Video**

*Sounding Joy - Official Lyric Video* by Ellie Holcomb (3:50)

## Explore it

Remember to send home the *Explore It Ideas* for children and families.



'Explore It!' is produced by the Children and Youth Department in collaboration with Kay Moorby (soulwithaiew)



## The Holy Spirit shows that God is with us

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.



### Verse:

Luke 2:1-7; Matthew 1:18-25  
The birth of Jesus



### Aim:

To learn how the Holy Spirit was crucial to the Christmas story



### Discover

Watch the clip to discover more about the Holy Spirit.

**Who is the Holy Spirit: Early Childhood Lesson** by CCC Kids



### Share

In your Explore It session this week you created a new candle for your Advent wreath representing the joy of the birth of Jesus Christ. Add the candle to your wreath and then watch the following clip together with loved ones at home.

**Advent for Kids: JOY (Week 3) - 5 Minute Family Devotional/Kids Bible Story** by Minno Bible Stories for Kids (3:56)



### Song for the week

**Holy Spirit for Children - Christian Songs for Kids** by Aji and friends (3:28)



### Memory verse

'The angel said to them, "Don't be afraid, because I am bringing you some good news. It will be a joy to all the people. Today your Saviour was born in David's town. He is Christ the Lord.'"

(Luke 2:10-11 /CB)

**LIVING OUT FAITH**

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Children & Youth

# God is with the shepherds

**Verse:**

Luke 2:8-20

Some shepherds hear about Jesus

**Aim:**

To know that 'God with us' means everyone - rich and poor



The repeated message of the Christmas story is that God is with us.

In this week's session, the angels visit the lowly shepherds as they take care of their sheep on the hillside. God values the shepherds enough to send a choir of angels and to give them the opportunity to be the first to meet Jesus. No matter who we are, rich or poor, God loves us very much and is always with us.

**Each child will need:**

- Pens/pencils and paper
- Explore It Ideas handout

**You will need:**

- Explore it Ideas handout
- Materials to create a 'God with us' Christmas Tree decoration
- Material to create the 'Love' candle (this will depend on the method you chose for your group)



## Start it

To start off today's session, complete the *Beano* Christmas Quiz shown in the link below:  
[www.beano.com/posts/funny-christmas-quiz](http://www.beano.com/posts/funny-christmas-quiz)

**Ask:**

What fun facts did you discover from the quiz?

**Say:**

It's important to remember that there are lots of traditions around at Christmas including Santa, lists and reindeers. However, we are celebrating the birth of Jesus, so let's now turn to the start of that story in music ...

## Sing it

**Say:**

Our song for today shares the story of the shepherds on the hillside.

### Video

'It was on a Starry Night' by King's Kids Worship (2:15)



## Tell it

**Ask:**

In our session last week, we discovered that the name 'Immanuel' given to Jesus had a special meaning. What was it?

**Say:**

Immanuel means 'God with us', and this promise carries on in our story this week.

**Read:**

**'That night, some shepherds were in the fields nearby watching their sheep. An angel of the Lord stood before them. The glory of the Lord was shining around them, and suddenly they became very frightened.'**

(Luke 2:8-9 ICB)

**Say:**

We have just listened to Luke 2:8-9 and everyone here should know what comes next. We've finally reached our memory verse. Let's share it together.

### Memory verse

**'The angel said to them, "Don't be afraid, because I am bringing you some good news. It will be a joy to all the people. Today your Saviour was born in David's town. He is Christ the Lord.'"**

(Luke 2:10-11 ICB)

**Ask:**

Why was it surprising that the angels came to visit the shepherds?

**Say:**

The shepherds were not rich, clean, or respected; in fact, they were about as far away from wise men or kings as you could get! They worked with hands covered in dirt, stood in fields in all weathers and looked after filthy animals. These were not the most important people.

**Ask:**

What do you imagine the angels looked like?

**Say:**

The Bible suggests that the angels were impressive heavenly beings.

**Ask:**

Each time an angel appeared in the Christmas story, what did they say?

**Say:**

'Don't be afraid' was the first thing the angels said to the shepherds. They must have been an amazing sight, filling the night sky with their glorious light.

**Read:**

**“This is how you will know him: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a feeding box.” Then a very large group of angels from heaven joined the first angel. All the angels were praising God, saying: “Give glory to God in heaven, and on earth let there be peace to the people who please God.” Then the angels left the shepherds and went back to heaven. The shepherds said to each other, “Let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened. We will see this thing the Lord told us about.” So the shepherds went quickly and found Mary and Joseph. And the shepherds saw the baby lying in a feeding box. Then they told what the angels had said about this child. Everyone was amazed when they heard what the shepherds said to them. Mary hid these things in her heart; she continued to think about them. Then the shepherds went back to their sheep, praising God and thanking him for everything that they had seen and heard. It was just as the angel had told them.’**

(Luke 2:12-20 *ICB*)

**Say:**

The lowly shepherds were chosen to be the first to visit Jesus when he was in the manger. This showed that the good news of Jesus – ‘God with us’ – really was for everyone.

## Action it

For the Action It activity, the children are going to make a Christmas tree decoration to remind them of the ‘God with us’ message of Christmas. A Pinterest link is provided below to an image for a decoration using wooden lollypop sticks. You can use this idea as a starting point, but the main aim is to create a decoration which bears the message ‘God with us’. The children can then take their decoration home and hang it on their Christmas tree.

[www.pinterest.co.uk/pin/317292736258891991](http://www.pinterest.co.uk/pin/317292736258891991)

(by Housing a Forest: [www.housingaforest.com/popsicle-stick-manger-craft/](http://www.housingaforest.com/popsicle-stick-manger-craft/))

## Pray it

In today's session you will need to prepare the resources for the children to make their 'Love' candle.

### **Say:**

Our Advent prayer theme for this week is 'Love'. The biggest way God showed his love for us was by giving his only son to be born on earth. Through this love, he died on a cross and rose from the dead. This was all so that God could show his love to us.

### **Ask:**

Do you know that God loves you? How do you know?

### **Say:**

Think of someone in your life who doesn't know how much God loves them. As you make your Advent candle this week, spend time praying for them.

### **Ask:**

How could you show love to this person at Christmas?

After the children have completed their candle ask them, if they feel comfortable, to share who they were thinking about as they made it.

Spend time praying for the people the children have mentioned.

## Explore it

Remember to send home the *Explore It Ideas* for children and families.



## God is with the shepherds

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.



### Verse:

Luke 2:8-20

Some shepherds hear about Jesus



### Aim:

To know that 'God with us' means everyone – rich and poor



### Create

In today's session you tried the *Beano* Christmas Quiz. Create your own quiz to try out with the people at home over Christmas.



### Share

In your Explore It session this week, you created a new candle for your Advent wreath representing the love God showed to the world when he sent his only son. Add the candle to your wreath and then watch the following clip with your loved ones at home.

**Advent for Kids: LOVE (Week 4) - 5 Minute Family Devotional/Kids Bible Story (5:26)**  
by Minno Bible Stories for Kids



### Song for the week

'It was on a Starry Night' by King's Kids Worship (2:15)



### Memory verse

'The angel said to them, "Don't be afraid, because I am bringing you some good news. It will be a joy to all the people. Today your Saviour was born in David's town. He is Christ the Lord."'

(Luke 2:10-11 /CB)

**LIVING  
OUT FAITH**

Today's story is illustrated in this week's *Kids Alive!* The UK's only weekly Christian comic – filled with jokes, competitions, Bible-based cartoons and much more...and is now available to read online!

[salvationarmy.org.uk/kidsalive](http://salvationarmy.org.uk/kidsalive).



Children  
& Youth

# Seeing Salvation

**Verse:**

Luke 2:25-38

Simeon and Anna see Jesus

**Aim:**

To prepare to listen to the Holy Spirit in your life



Simeon and Anna had spent their entire lives serving God and worshipping him in the Temple.

Even though they were very old, they knew that God would keep his promise and send a saviour to earth. They were not disappointed, and in today's session we discover more about their story.

## Each child will need:

- Pens/pencils and paper
- Explore It Ideas handout

## You will need:

- Paper and pencils
- Materials to make a windmill (instructions provided)
- Materials to make the final Advent candle or electric tea lights



## Start it

**Say:**

We have spent the past five weeks learning all about the Christmas story. Let's see how much you can remember.

The children can work either individually or in pairs to take part in this 'Who wants to be a millionaire?' styled quiz. Give each individual/pair a sheet of paper and discover who can earn the most points in the quiz. The point scoring system is quite unusual, so you may just want to reward the team with the most correct answers. You may want to provide a prize for the winners.

## Video

*Christmas Story Bible Trivia Game for Kids* by Children's Ministry Deals (6:41)

## Sing it

### Say:

Our song for today brings together all the themes of Advent. It reminds us that, through the birth of Jesus, we are filled with hope, peace, joy and love.

### Video

*'I've Got the Joy' with Lyrics Christmas Song* by Christmas Songs and Carols (2:59)

## Tell it

### Say:

Our Bible story today is all about an elderly man and woman who had patiently waited all their lives to meet Jesus. We can find their story in the book of Luke.

The law of the day meant that Mary and Joseph had to take Jesus to the Temple in Jerusalem for a small ceremony to thank God for him. This was Simeon and Anna's moment. They would finally meet Jesus.

### Read:

**'A man named Simeon lived in Jerusalem. He was a good man and very religious. He was waiting for the time when God would help Israel. The Holy Spirit was in him. The Holy Spirit told Simeon that he would not die before he saw the Christ promised by the Lord. The Spirit led Simeon to the Temple. Mary and Joseph brought the baby Jesus to the Temple to do what the law said they must do. Then Simeon took the baby in his arms and thanked God: "Now, Lord, you can let me, your servant, die in peace as you said. I have seen your Salvation with my own eyes."'**

(Luke 2:25-30 ICB)

### Ask:

Think back to our earlier session all about the Holy Spirit.

- What does the Bible mean when it says of Simeon, 'The Holy Spirit was in him'?
- How did the Holy Spirit guide Simeon?
- What kinds of things does the Holy Spirit do in our lives?

### Say:

Simeon held Jesus in his arms. He believed that Jesus was the saviour the world had been waiting for and said to God, 'I have seen your Salvation with my own eyes.'



**Ask:**

- What do you think Simeon meant?
- What does salvation mean?

**Say:**

We are The Salvation Army, so it is important as Christians and members of this church that we understand what our name means. Simeon knew that he had met the Saviour of the world. The name Jesus also means 'salvation'. The Christmas story is so much more than a Nativity scene; it is a message of salvation for the world.

Simeon wasn't the only one to meet Jesus in the Temple ...

**Read:**

**'Anna, a prophetess, was there at the Temple. She was from the family of Phanuel in the tribe of Asher. Anna was very old. She had once been married for seven years. Then her husband died and she lived alone. She was now 84 years old. Anna never left the Temple. She worshipped God by going without food and praying day and night. She was standing there at that time, thanking God. She talked about Jesus to all who were waiting for God to free Jerusalem.'**

(Luke 2:36-38 ICB)

**Ask:**

What did Anna do once she had met Jesus?

**Say:**

Today we have discovered what it means to know Jesus and, because of the way his Holy Spirit nudges us, some of you may have thought about this for the first time. Just like Anna, we need to give thanks for him and share who he is with others. Like our song said, knowing Jesus can bring you real joy.

## Action it

The aim of this activity is to create a windmill to remind the children how the Holy Spirit moves in their lives. A link is provided below for instructions to make a windmill. You can adapt this according to the resources you have available. Ask the children to think about ways they would like the Holy Spirit to guide them in the New Year. They can write their ideas on their windmill.

[www.ministry-to-children.com/spirit-pinwheel-craft](http://www.ministry-to-children.com/spirit-pinwheel-craft)

**Say:**

Simeon carried the Holy Spirit within him. He was guided to meet Jesus because he listened to the Holy Spirit as he moved in Simeon's heart. We don't always know exactly how the Holy Spirit works in our lives, but he is always working in the hearts of those who follow Jesus.

Our Action It activity today reminds us of the power of the Holy Spirit blowing through our lives, moving us forward.

## Pray it

The final activity will depend on the kind of Advent wreath you decided to make with the children. The children will need to make their final Advent candle for the centre of their wreath representing 'Christ'. Alternatively, you could purchase electric tea lights to give to each child. They can then use these in the prayer activity and take them home to either place it in the centre of or next to their wreaths.

Recap the four weeks of Advent and their key themes.

### **Say:**

The final central candle of the Advent wreath is usually lit on Christmas Day. It represents the message contained in our memory verse.

## **Memory verse**

**'The angel said to them, "Don't be afraid, because I am bringing you some good news. It will be a joy to all the people. Today your Saviour was born in David's town. He is Christ the Lord."'**

(Luke 2:10-11 *ICB*)

### **Say:**

On Christmas Day we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ – a birth that brings joy, peace, hope and love to the world.

## **Video**

Watch the clip together and then bring the session to a close in prayer.

**'Light of the World'** by Lauren Daigle (with lyrics) (4:08)

## Explore it

Remember to send home the *Explore It Ideas* for children and families.



'Explore It!' is produced by the Children and Youth Department in collaboration with Kay Moorby (soulwithaview)

## Seeing Salvation

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.



**Verse:**  
Luke 2:25-38  
Simeon and Anna see Jesus



**Aim:**  
To prepare to listen to the Holy Spirit in your life



### Tell

Anna took every opportunity to tell others about Jesus. This week, be brave and talk to your friends about your faith in Jesus.



### Share

Add the final candle to your wreath and then watch the following clip with your loved ones at home. The clip tells a fictional story of the little drummer boy which, although it is only a story and not in the Bible, reminds us that we can all worship God in our own way this Christmas.

**Advent for Kids: LOVE (Week 5) - 5 Minute Family Devotional/Kids Bible Story (5:13)**  
by Minno Bible Stories for Kids



### Song for the week

**'I've Got the Joy' with Lyrics Christmas Song** by Christmas Songs and Carols (2:59)



### Memory verse

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# Explore it

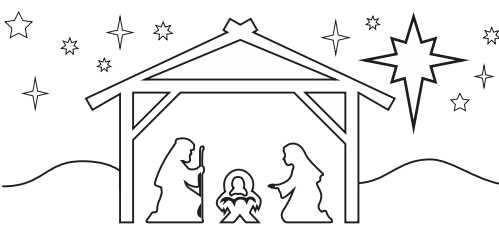
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**It will be a joy to all the people.**

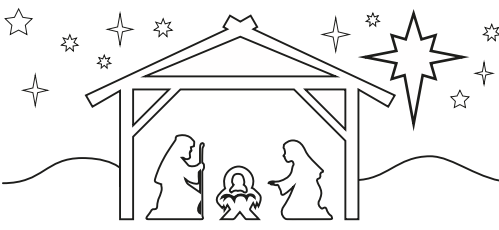
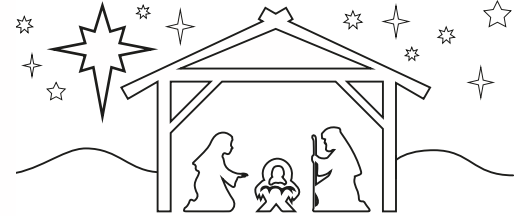
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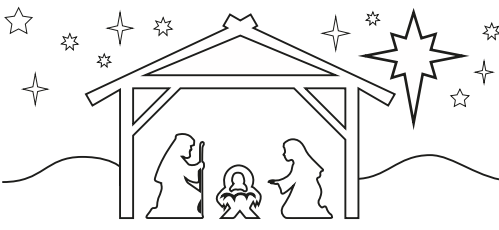
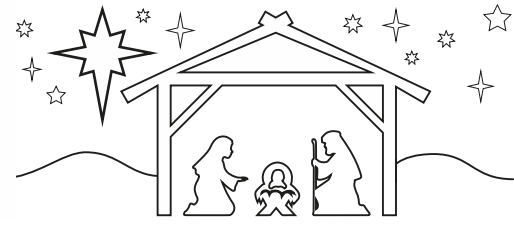
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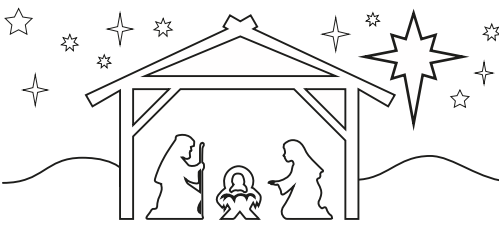
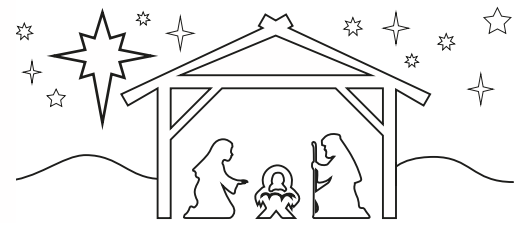
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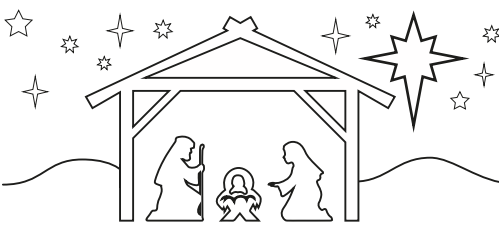
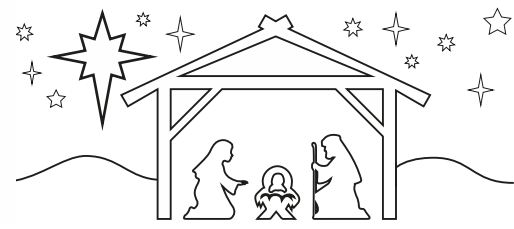
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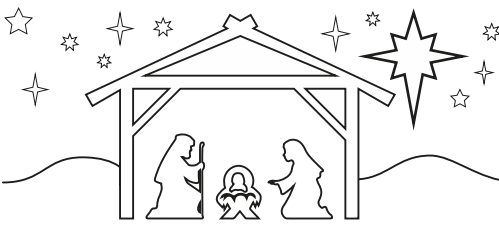
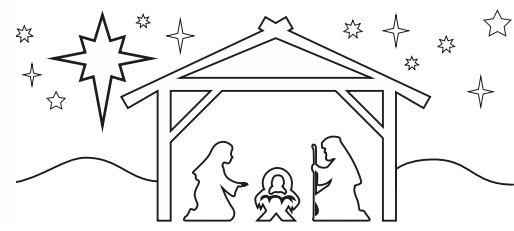
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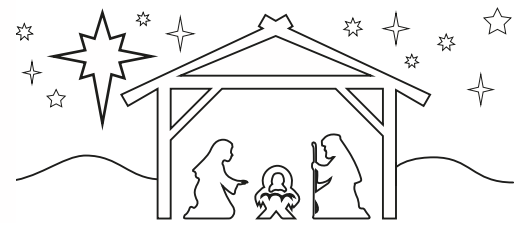
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