



RIGHT TRACKS

THE GREATEST DAY IN HISTORY

FAITH-BASED ASSEMBLY



Aim

- To learn who was invited to celebrate in the birth of Jesus
- To learn about how we are invited to celebrate in the birth of Jesus
- To find out some of the ways that The Salvation Army celebrates Christmas



Resources

- PowerPoint presentation
- Invitation - you may wish to print out as A3
- 'The Greatest Day' sticker (optional)



Bible verse

'A child will be born to us. God will give a son to us. He will be responsible for leading the people. His name will be Wonderful Counsellor, Powerful God, Father Who Lives For Ever, Prince of Peace.'

(Isaiah 9:6 ICB)



You will need:

- A glittery, special envelope for the invitation, ideally A4 or larger. You may wish to fill the envelope with glitter, confetti or streamers (remember it will need to be tidied up easily afterwards!)
- A smartphone (on mute)
- A Bible with a small, discreet bookmark at Isaiah 9:6
- If using 'The Greatest Day' stickers, insert the image into a sheet of sticker labels then print.



INTRODUCTION

Slide 1 - The envelope

Introduce yourself and welcome pupils to assembly.

I received an envelope today. I used to love getting mail, but these days it seems always to be bills! But this one - I don't think it's a bill. *Show the envelope to the pupils.* The envelope looks glittery and special and unique.





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It has my name on it. The envelope is quite thin, but I think there's something inside. I wonder what this could be? *Take a few responses.*



Slide 2 - The invitation

Open the envelope to reveal the invitation. You may wish to ask a pupil to help you read it.

'You are invited to join in the celebration of the greatest day in history!'

Ooh! An invitation! That's usually good fun! I love a good party. But what's it for? I wonder what the 'greatest day in history' could be? The greatest day in history ... That must have been quite a big day. I wonder what happened on that day? *Take a few responses. Answer positively, eg 'I hope so', or 'Possibly'.*

MAIN TALK

Google it

These are all special events, but I wonder if they could be called the 'greatest day in history'? I know - when in doubt, Google it! Let me get my phone out here. OK - what is the greatest day in history? *Mime typing out on the phone and 'reading' the results.*

Oh, there's a lot of possible answers here. The ending of wars ... peace between those who were fighting battles ... new laws that help bring about justice and fairness ... when a special baby was born ... There's a common theme here - peace and love. These are all events that brought us peace and love. That's encouraging to know. But which one of these events could the invitation be for? I need more information. Let's look at the invitation again ... *Closely examine the invitation.*



Slide 3 - Isaiah 9:6

Aha! I've spotted it now! A clue. Can you see on the side, in the pattern, there is a name? *Point out the message 'Isaiah 9:6' on the slide and the invitation.*

Isaiah 9:6. Isaiah - I wonder what that means? *You may wish to ask for some responses.*

Isaiah - I remember now, that's the name of a book in the Bible, the Christian holy book. The book of Isaiah tells the story of a man called Isaiah; he was a prophet a long, long time ago. A prophet is someone who listens to





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God and shares what they hear with the people around them. So what did Isaiah say was God's message? *Look up the passage in the Bible.*



Slide 4 - Christian perspective

'A child will be born to us. God will give a son to us. He will be responsible for leading the people. His name will be Wonderful Counsellor, Powerful God, Father Who Lives For Ever, Prince of Peace.'

(Isaiah 9:6 ICB)

A child will be born to us ... That's one of the events Google mentioned - a special baby being born. This particular baby will become a leader, someone who gives good advice on how to live and be the Prince of Peace.

Here's a thought - perhaps the greatest day in history was when a baby was born, a baby who was all about peace and justice and love. For Christians, that could only mean one person. Do you know who that baby was? Take a variety of responses - hopefully one will be Jesus!

Christians believe that when Jesus was born it was a really special moment for the world. Christians believe that Jesus was God's son coming to earth and living with us, knowing us and teaching us how to live in peace and fairness and love. People, like Isaiah, knew Jesus was going to come. People had been waiting for hundreds of years for the birth of this special baby.

And when he finally did come, some unusual people were invited to take part in the celebration. Do you know who they were? *Take a variety of responses - hopefully you will get shepherds and wise men / kings as answers!*



Slide 5 - Shepherds

A group of shepherds were invited to celebrate Jesus' birth. In Bible times shepherds were not very popular people. Looking after sheep and living outdoors in the countryside was a very smelly and dirty job. But it was shepherds who got the amazing invitation to go and see Jesus. Angels filled the sky, sang to them and told them where to find the new baby.



Slide 6 - Wise men

Another group that was invited were wise men - we sometimes call them kings, perhaps because they could afford to bring expensive gifts for Jesus. They were respected people. The wise men got their invitation from a star - a star! They had seen a bright new star in the sky and had figured out that it





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meant someone special was to be born. They followed the star and it led them to the place where Jesus was.

Today, we don't get angels or stars to invite us to celebrate the birth of Jesus - we don't even need special glittery invitations either. We are always welcome to celebrate Jesus' birth, to celebrate Christmas. This whole season, Christmas, reminds us to celebrate - it's just that ... sometimes people get so caught up in the celebrating that they forget what it's all about - Jesus' birth.



Slide 7 - Salvation Army perspective

The Salvation Army, a Christian church and charity, believes in celebrating Christmas with a passion. When Christmas comes around there's music and singing and Nativity plays and parties and fun - open to everyone in the community. And at the heart of it all is the joy that Jesus was born.



Slide 8 - A Salvation Army Christmas

Part of celebrating Christmas is living out the values that Jesus taught - of peace and fairness and love. The Salvation Army demonstrates this in many ways. For example, The Salvation Army has a Christmas present appeal to help families who are struggling. Salvation Army people provide food boxes and meals for people who need it. They visit people who are alone or vulnerable. They help people who have no home, so they feel valued and cared for. The Salvation Army celebrates Christmas by helping and loving others - though of course, many of these activities happen all year round.



REFLECTION

Slide 9 - Reflection

Christmas inspires us to spread peace and fairness and love with others. So as we enjoy all the fun and celebration this year, this Christmas, what could you do to help spread peace and fairness and love to others? How might you celebrate the real meaning behind Christmas? *Pause for a few moments to reflect.*



SONG

Slide 10 - Song

The Salvation Army has written a song to help remind us that we are all invited to celebrate the birth of Jesus - the greatest day in history!

Play the song 'The Greatest Day in History' and encourage pupils to sing along.





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Slide 11 - Goodbye

Thank the pupils and staff for letting you be a part of their assembly.

You may wish to give pupils a sticker (or the sheets of stickers to each teacher) as they leave.

*Play the song '**The Greatest Day in History**' as pupils leave.*

