

ALLEY SG - December 16- 17, 2023

Today's Bible Story: Repeat the Sounding Joy (Jesus Is Born) • *Luke 2:1-7*

Today's Key Question: What makes your Christmas joyful?

Monthly Memory Verse: *A child will be born to us. A son will be given to us. He will rule over us. And he will be called Wonderful Adviser and Mighty God. He will also be called Father Who Lives Forever and Prince Who Brings Peace.* Isaiah 9:6 (NIRV)

1. Joy Ornament Craft



What You Need: Joy wooden ornament (one per kid), markers, decorating supplies, small heart gem

What You Do:

- Ask, "Why can we have joy in any situation?" (*Because God sent his son Jesus.*)
- Pass out an ornament to each child.
- Place the markers and decorating supplies in the middle of the group.
- Have kids create their ornaments.
- As the kids are coloring their ornaments, ask them what each of these words had to do with our story today:
 - Donkey (*Mary and Joseph probably rode a donkey to Bethlehem.*)
 - Manger (*After Jesus was born, Mary placed Baby Jesus in a manger or feeding trough to sleep. They were staying in a place where animals stayed because there were no guest rooms available.*)
 - Heart (*God loved us and sent us Jesus, the Savior.*)
 - Baby (*When Mary's Baby was born, she named Him Jesus.*)
 - JOY (*We can have JOY because God has given us the gift of a Savior.*)
- Encourage them to hang their ornament on their tree to remind them we can have JOY because God sent Jesus!

2. Take a Snapshot

What You Need: Paper plates (one per kid), markers

What You Do:

- Give each kid a paper plate and a marker.
- Instruct the kids to place the plate on top of their head.
- Without showing others or removing the plate from their heads, direct the kids to use the marker to write about or draw something on the plate that brings them joy.
- Be sure to participate in this activity as well!
- When finished, invite the kids to take turns showing what they wrote or drew.
- Before a kid explains their drawings or writings, encourage the other kids to guess what it is.

- Ask:
 - Do you think there is a difference between joy and happiness? Explain why or why not.
 - Can someone have joy even when things are not going the way they want? If so, why?
 - What do you know about Jesus that gives you joy?

3. Discussion Questions

- Share your favorite part about the story of the first Christmas.
- Even if your Christmas falls short of what you'd hoped for, what's something you can still be joyful about?
- Why is it important to celebrate Jesus' birth?
- Why does Jesus top every other gift we've been given or have yet to receive?

4. Pass the Present

Memory Verse Activity

What You Need: Small Christmas Box (1 per group), Bible

What You Do:

- Give each child a Bible and look up the memory verse together.
- Guide kids to sit in a large circle and give the box to one of the kids.
- Lead kids to say the verse word by word (with help as needed) as they pass to box to the person next to them. Play a few times, getting faster each time.
- Try it again, but instead of passing the box, toss the box to someone across the circle saying one word of the verse at a time.
- Play as time allows, encouraging kids to say the verse faster each round.

5. Make It Personal with Prayer

- "Dear Jesus, You are the reason we celebrate Christmas. Help us to not get so caught up in the lights and gifts that we lose sight of what is most important—YOU. You bring 'joy to the world,' and we are so glad You came to save us. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

PARENT PICK UP POINT: As adults arrive to pick up, encourage the kids to show them the joy ornament they made and ask them to tell their parent why we can have joy in any situation.