

**All-in-One**  
**BIBLE**  
**FUN**

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# In the Stable

## Bible Verse

To you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.

Luke 2:11

## Bible Story

Luke 2:1-20

Mary and Joseph had to travel to Bethlehem to be counted for a census just prior to the birth of their baby. Joseph was a descendent of King David, so Bethlehem was the place where they had to go. Bethlehem was approximately 85 miles south of Nazareth, the town where Joseph and Mary lived.

The tired couple arrived in Bethlehem after their long journey to find that the large number of pilgrims already there had filled most of the available guest rooms. Mary and Joseph were forced to seek shelter in a caravansary, which served as an inn. Inns in those days were likely to be dirty, unfurnished, and poorly managed. Joseph and Mary found themselves staying overnight with the animals in a stable when the inn had no more room. It was in the stable that Jesus was born. The King of kings might have been born in a stable but his birth was announced from the heavens. However, the ones to hear the good news

were a group of shepherds on a hillside outside of town. These workers were also the first to seek out the newborn Savior. Awed by the angel's message, they immediately left in search of the baby Jesus. They told others, after seeing the baby, of the marvelous event they had just witnessed.

Who would you choose to be the first to hear the news of the greatest birth of the century? Would you choose to have the important announcement delivered to the marginalized of society? Probably not. Chances are you would have chosen the most influential persons of your society. But when God decided to send Jesus into the world, Jesus came as an ordinary person. He lived an ordinary life with ordinary parents. Jesus could therefore identify with the poor people of his day and with their struggles. How appropriate that Jesus' life story should begin in the humblest fashion—in an animal shelter.



## Jesus is the Savior God promised.

If time is limited, we recommend those activities that are noted in **boldface**. Depending on your time and the number of children, you may be able to include more activities.

ACTIVITY	TIME	SUPPLIES
Christmas Creche	15 minutes	Reproducibles 1A and 1B, scissors, crayons or felt-tip markers, white glue, tape, decorating supplies such as dried coffee grounds, sand or sawdust, clay, twigs, dried grass, pieces of fabric, and so forth
Animal Arias	10 minutes	<b>blindfold</b>
Who Are You?	5 minutes	None
Sing and Celebrate	5 minutes	None
<b>Bible Story: God's Own Son</b>	10 minutes	<b>None</b>
Story-Go-Round	5 minutes	index cards, felt-tip markers, ball
Do-Wa-Ditty-Ditty	5 minutes	index cards, felt-tip markers in red and blue
Stable Prayers	5 minutes	<b>hay or raffia</b>

JOIN THE FUN

BIBLE STORY FUN

LIVE THE FUN

## Supplies

Reproducibles 1A and 1B, scissors, crayons or felt-tip markers, white glue, tape, decorating supplies such as dried coffee grounds, sand or sawdust, clay, twigs, dried grass, pieces of fabric, and so forth



## Supplies

blindfold



# Christmas Creche

Make a copy of the Nativity background (Reproducibles 1A and 1B) for each child or team of children in the class. Provide a box for the diorama that is about the same size as a shoe box. If you have a large class let children work together on the project. Smaller classes will enjoy making individual creches.

Welcome the children as they arrive. Get them started on their project(s). Show them how to cut apart the two background pieces and tape or glue them together to form a continuous background. Attach the background to the back of the box(es). Let the children add the figures of the holy family and the shepherds. Provide dried coffee grounds, sand, or sawdust for the stable floor(s). Let the children use their imaginations as to how to furnish their stable(s). Display the scenes during the season (*if you are doing this unit during the Christmas season*).



# Animal Arias

Have the children be seated and form a circle. Blindfold one player to be "IT" and lead him or her to the center of the circle. IT will rotate in place with one arm outstretched. When IT stops, IT will ask the player to whom he or she is pointing to make a sound that baby Jesus might have heard as he slept in the stable.

IT must then identify the player from the sound the person makes. If IT is successful the player and IT change places. You might want to save this for later in the lesson if you have a class where children don't know one another.



**Jesus is the Savior God promised.**

## Who Are You?

Have the children sit on the floor in a large circle.

**Say:** Today we are going to play a game of names. Names were important during Bible times. The angels, as we study the story of Christmas, were very insistent about the name that would be given to the child who would be born to Mary and Joseph. Names often identified peoples' status to others. Jesus, for example, would have been known as Jesus bar Joseph, which means Jesus, son of Joseph. But we know Jesus as Jesus, Son of God, Jesus as Messiah, Jesus as Savior, and Jesus as Prince of Peace.

**Continue:** Let's play a game of names. As we go around the circle each of you will give your name and some important fact about yourself. You can choose what this fact will be. It can be your favorite food, your favorite game, or your favorite color. I might say, for example, "My name is *(give your name)*, and I like to teach Sunday school." Listen very carefully because I want to see how well each of you remembers.

When everyone has given his or her name, have all the class members stand up. Then select someone from the group. (Use volunteers at first to avoid embarrassing persons who might be unsure.) The person you select will try to name each of the other persons and identify his or her special fact. If the identification is correct that person will sit down. If not, the namer may have one hint. If the namer gets stuck a second time everyone will stand back up and another person will be chosen.

## Sing and Celebrate

Sing together the song "The Kind Old Innkeeper" to the tune of "Old MacDonald." Let the children name different animals to include in the song.

### The Kind Old Innkeeper (Tune: "Old MacDonald")

The Kind Innkeeper had a stable,  
On that starry night.  
And in the stable he had a donkey,  
On that starry night.  
With a hee haw here, and hee haw  
there;  
Here a hee, there a haw.  
E'vrywhere a hee haw.  
The Kind Innkeeper had a stable,  
On that starry night.

The Kind Innkeeper had a stable,  
On that starry night.  
And in the stable he had a *(name animal)*,  
On that starry night.  
With a *(animal sound)*, and *(animal  
sound)* there;  
Here a *(animal sound)*, there a *(animal  
sound)*.  
E'vrywhere a *(animal sound)*.  
The Kind Innkeeper had a stable,  
On that starry night.

Words: Daphna Flegel © 1997 Abingdon Press.

### Supplies

None



### Supplies

None



# God's Own Son



by LeeDell Stickler

Teach the children the response to the story and the hand motions that go with it. The response is sung to the tune of "Little Cabin in the Woods."

**Little stable in the town**

*(Make a tent overhead with your hands, fingertips touching.)*

**Bright starlight is shining down.**

*(Hold both hands up, fingers outstretched.*

*Wiggle fingers as you bring your arms down.)*

**Tiny baby, God's own Son**

*(Pretend to be rocking a baby.)*

**Jesus is the One.**

*(Touch the palm of your left hand with the middle finger of your right hand;*

*touch the palm of your right hand with the middle finger of your left hand.*

*Then hold up the index finger of your right hand, indicating the number 1.)*

Have the children practice the signs and the words until they feel comfortable with the refrain.

God looked down at the earth. "I can't believe it! Even with all the laws I have given them, they still haven't gotten it right. I've even sent my prophets, but the people ignore them. Nothing seems to make a difference. There's only one thing left to do. I'll send my Son. He'll teach them what they need to know. He'll show them how to love one another and care for one another. He'll set an example for them."

**Sing refrain with motions.**

"First I have to choose just the right family to care for my Son. I don't want the family to be rich and powerful because then my Son will not know what it means to be just an ordinary boy. I want my Son grow up like any normal boy and to learn to make his living, just like the rest must do."

**Sing refrain with motions.**

So God looked around and found the perfect place and the perfect family. God chose a young girl from the village of Nazareth. Her

name was Mary. She was engaged to marry Joseph, the carpenter in the village. And God said, "Mary will be a good mother for my Son. Joseph will watch out for her and for the child. They are just right."

**Sing refrain with motions.**

The emperor Augustus decreed that all men had to return to their hometowns to be counted for a census. Even though it was very close to the time for her baby to be born, Mary and Joseph made the trip to Bethlehem. But when they got there the town was so crowded that there were no rooms. All that was left was a little stable filled with the animals of travelers. That is just where God's Son was born, in a tiny stable with only the animals to keep watch.

**Sing refrain with motions.**

God called the angels together. "I want everyone to know about this special baby. Go, tell the people that their Savior has been born."

**Sing refrain with motions.**

So the angels looked all about. They wanted to find someone who would be excited about this good

news. The rich and the powerful were much too busy to take time to celebrate the birth of a poor baby. So the angels found a group of shepherds who were out on the hillside. And they began to sing the good news of the Savior's birth to them.

**Sing refrain with motions.**

At first the shepherds were frightened. But then they looked at one another and began to wonder why God had chosen them to hear the wonderful news. They were excited and decided to find the child that the angels had told them about.

**Sing refrain with motions.**

