



Time to Celebrate

Lesson 2:

*Experiencing the joy of giving, receiving
and celebrating together*

Angels sang and rejoiced as they announced the birth of Jesus. Shepherds rushed to see the baby. Wise men came from far to bring gifts and worship this little king. Infants and toddlers can relate to the joy of celebration through cheering, singing and the gift-giving at a birthday party.

Scripture: "The angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people." Luke 2:10 (NIV)

Class Schedule

45 Minutes

Welcome Time (15 minutes)

On the mat in the soft corner. Time to settle in and enjoy free play. Music or singing.

Bible Time and Lesson (20 minutes total)

At the table

- **Bible Time**
- **Lesson:** (In preparation for class the teacher should read Luke 2:8-20 and Matthew 2:1-12). In the lesson share how angels, shepherds and wise men joyously celebrated the birth of Jesus. As you tell the story of the wise men who followed the star to worship and give gifts you can make it relatable to children by comparing it to attending a birthday party for Jesus.
- **Craft:** (optional) Any craft relating to angels, shepherds or a birthday party.
- **Snack:** Water and any simple snack will do (raisins, crackers, vegetables or fruit).

Closing (10 minutes)

On the mat in the soft corner Quiet activities to settle down.

Teaching Items to Collect

- Large picture or figurines of the birth of Jesus
- Picture books or other illustrations depicting the scenes around the announcement of Jesus' birth. Choose realistic ones over cartoonish if possible.
- Life size infant doll (Jesus)
- Star wand
- Birthday party items:
 - Cake (a round cardboard "box" makes a great play cake).
 - Candles (Real ones are fun to blow out but handle carefully. Or use battery operated candles if preferred.)
 - Party hats
 - Gift bag and tissue paper
 - Baby toys to wrap as gifts for Jesus
 - Shiny "gold" gift objects would be a great addition



1. Welcome Time

(15 minutes) *On the mat in the soft corner*
Time to settle in and enjoy free play.
Make a star out of shiny paper and play an obvious game of “hide and seek” with it so the children can find it.

- Star
- Bubbles/toys/picture books
- Welcome each by name
- Mirrors, Peep Tube, Vehicles
- Bell to indicate class is about to start

2. Bible Time

When you move to the table spend the first 5 minutes in routines that you repeat each week.

- Pat the bible
- Find Jesus picture (sticker) in bible. Take time to talk about Jesus as our friend.
- “Read” - God loves _____. Filling the blank with the child’s name and members of his/her family.
- Sing B-I-B-L-E

Vocabulary:

- Happy Birthday
- Sing
- Happy
- Celebrate

Sensory:

- Clapping hands to celebrate
- Singing “Happy Birthday”
- Crinkly wrapping paper
- Shiny star
- Smell of match and candle

3. Bible Lesson

(15 minutes) *At the table*

- Act out the story using a manger or crèche nativity set.
- Use illustrations or picture books to show the angels and shepherds. Try these ideas to bring life to the pictures:
 - Be a little dramatic with the shepherds’ fear and then the angel’s happy announcement.
 - Robustly sing the first lines of “Joy to the World” to show the angels joyous singing.
 - “Rush” the shepherds and a few sheep to Bethlehem to see the baby. “Ooh” and “Ahh” over the cute baby.
- The wise men would have come later. Continue as you use the nativity set or illustrations:
 - Wrap the gifts and get them ready for Baby Jesus.
 - Hold up a “star” and let the wise men follow it until they arrive at the place where baby Jesus is.
 - Now it is time to have that birthday party:
 - Prepare the “cake” and light the candles.
 - Sing “Happy Birthday” to Jesus and let him “blow out the candles and open the gifts.” Some children might want to repeat this over and over.
- Craft (optional): Choose a craft depicting one part of the story (birthday theme, angels, or shepherds).
- Prayer: Fold hands and close eyes to pray.
- Snack: Minnie muffin or cupcake or birthday cookie.

4. Closing

(10 minutes) *On the mat in the soft corner.* Quiet activities to settle down

- Cuddle the baby dolls and put them to bed.
- Read a book or look at pictures of announcing Jesus’ birth.



Suggested Songs for this Lesson:

Note: Infants and toddlers enjoy the rhythm and melody of song but they are not critics of the teacher's abilities! It's fine if you sing the same tune every time, make up your own tune or even just say the words in a poetic or fun way. Just have fun with it and put the children's needs above your own shyness.

Joy to the World

Joy to the world! The Lord is come
Let earth receive her King!
Let every heart prepare Him room
And heaven and nature sing
And heaven and nature sing
And heaven, and heaven and nature sing

**These are traditional words for the first verse. If the children are interested sing it happily and robustly and repeat. If they aren't interested just sing the first line or two. If you don't know the tune for the song, then search online for an example. There are a variety of versions.*

Happy Birthday to You

Happy Birthday to you.
Happy Birthday to you.
Happy Birthday dear Jesus.
Happy Birthday to you.

Tune: traditional

Action: Sing just before blowing out the candles on the cake.

If You're Happy and You Know It

If you're happy and you know it...
Clap your hands. (clap-clap)
If you're happy and you know it...
Clap your hands. (clap-clap)
If you're happy and you know then your face
will surely show it. (point to smile as you
sing)
If you're happy and you know it...
Clap your hands. (clap-clap)

Tune: Traditional

Action: Clap hands as indicated above If you don't know the tune for the song then search online. There are a variety of versions. Just one verse should be plenty for this age group.

Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star

Twinkle, twinkle, little star.
I'll find Jesus where you are.
Up above the world so high.
Like a diamond in the sky.
Twinkle, twinkle, little star.
I'll find Jesus where you are.

Tune: Traditional

Action: Repeat the motion of making a fist and then spreading fingers out as you sing about the star. Point up when you sing about the world so high. Make a diamond shape with your fingers as you sing about the diamond.



Items to Use to Teach this Lesson



Nativity Set. Be sure and have angels, shepherds, sheep, wise men, Jesus, Joseph and Mary.



Baby Jesus doll in manger. We are lucky to have a life-size doll that fits into a manger someone made for our class.



Jesus doll, wedding cake box, candle, matches, party hats.



Gift bag and toys,



Sparkly star. Having it on a stick helps you hold it while the Wise Men follow.