

**Focus:** Listening to God

**Materials:**

Prayer Altar: Cross, Candle, Chasuble on stand (priest's vestment) and Altar Cloth  
Advent Wreath and Flames  
Advent CD  
Bible: Children's Everyday Bible.  
100 Bible Stories/100 Bible Songs  
Adam Raccoon and the Flying Machine

**Gathering** (children find/sit on a carpet square)

Say: *Good Morning everyone, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. Last week we talked about God's blessings and how we can find them in every day things. Today we are going to see what Joseph did after something very special happened.*

**Opening Prayer**

Together we make the Sign of the Cross (do in reverse so children can mirror).

Say: *Now let's put our hands together and bow our heads.*

*Let us pray. God, you chose an ordinary family to make a home for Jesus. We want to make a home for him in our hearts. Give us the love to do this and let him be our brother, forever and ever. Amen.*

**Song/Movement**

*Hope, Peace, Joy and Love*, track: 1, from Advent CD

Play music, encourage children to stretch or move to the music (clapping, stamp feet march in place to the beat), turn to each other and shake hands, saying hello, etc. Have children sit on their carpet squares when finished.

Chorus:

I got your hope peace joy and love  
The best gifts come from above  
I got your hope peace joy and love  
in my heart  
(Repeat)

Hope is a light in the darkness,  
shining brightly on Bethlehem town  
The Messiah is born; he's our king  
and our lord; the promise of love  
we have found  
Glory to god in the highest; peace  
on earth and good will to all men  
Take the star in the east to the  
prince of peace who will someday  
be coming again.

Repeat chorus 2x

An angel appeared from the  
heavens, bringing news to the  
shepherds that night.  
Good tidings of joy, in the birth of a  
boy, born to give us forgiveness and  
life.  
Jesus Emmanuel Savior; little baby  
the gift from above  
He loved us so much he gave his  
only son, the gift of hope peace joy  
and love.

Repeat Chorus 4x

### Memory Verse

Say: *Now let's take a moment together to learn a verse from the bible.*

*Mary shall bear a son, and they will name him Emmanuel.*

Have the children repeat the verse after you a couple of times.

Say: *Emmanuel means "God-with-us". Before Jesus was born, God was not visible to the people of Israel. It's hard to have a friendship with someone who you can't see. Jesus came to live among God's people and tell them and show them all about God. He only was on earth a short time but we learn about Jesus and we learn about God from the stories of Jesus in the Bible.*

### Gospel Story

Say: *Today we are reading from the Gospel of Matthew.*

Have children make sign of the cross on their forehead, mouth and heart saying. *"Lord, open my mind, my lips and my heart so that I may learn it, speak it and love it."*

**Read:** Children's Everyday Bible, pp. 207, *Joseph's Dream*

After the reading say: *The Gospel of the Lord*

Children respond: *Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ*

### Discussion Starters:

*What kind of a man is Joseph?*

*What God tell Joseph?*

*Does Joseph obey God's message?*

### Reflection on Reading:

*In the Gospel today, God prepares Joseph for the birth of Jesus. At first Joseph does not understand why Mary is with child and so he is sad and decides to divorce her quietly. But then an angel of the Lord appears to Joseph in a dream. Joseph listens to God's message and takes Mary as his wife, believing that the child is a gift through the Holy Spirit.*

*Because Joseph is a descendent of David, Joseph's acceptance of Mary gives Jesus a place in the family line of David. Joseph is told by the angel of the Lord to give the child the name Jesus. The name Jesus means, "God saves." The angel helped Joseph understand that Mary's child would save all people from their sins.*

**Gospel Activity**Activity 1:

We see signs every day that tell us something. We see signs to stop at a stop light, we see signs that tell us where to cross the road, or a school is close by.

Ask if they can think of any others.

It is important to have signs so we know what we should do or not do. God gave us rules to follow too.

They are called the Ten Commandments. They tell us that we should love God, love our neighbor, be kind to others and always forgive.

Read the book 100 Bible Stories 100 Bible Songs, page 44, The Ten Commandments. Then play CD 1 track 18.

God wants us to be safe and he loves us very much. When we obey the commandments, we are showing we are thankful for God's love.

Activity 2:

Read the book: "Adam Raccoon and the Flying Machine"

- What did King Aren plan for Adam to build?
- What happened the first time Adam tried to build the flying machine?
- Why didn't Adam use the instruction book?
- What instruction book has God given us?
- The Bible doesn't teach us to build a flying machine—What does it teach us?
- What happens when we don't listen to God's Word?
- What happens when we follow God's Word?
- If you were Adam, what would you tell your friends you learned from your adventure?

Complete the weekly bulletin as a group—let the children color them if there is extra time

**Closing Prayer**

(Children respond: "I Believe!")

Ask: *Do you believe in God, who gives us signs and helps us believe?*

*Do you believe in Jesus, who is Emmanuel, God-with-us?*

*Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who gives us the power to do what God asks?*

**Sending Forth**

*Say: This week we can be good listeners and to what God wants us to do. He wants us to be kind to others because of our belief that Jesus came to live on earth and be our leader and guide. We can also remember that Christmas is more than wanting lots of stuff, it's about spending time with family and thanking God for the gift of Jesus.*

**Lining Up/Closing Song**

Play "Father, We Thank Thee" track 3 from Advent CD while children put away any materials and lineup. Hand out weekly bulletins. Remind them it is important that they return to their family quietly so that we may all listen and pray together in church.