

Adventures with GOD!

THE PLACE OF HIS BIRTH (C.1.WINTER.5)

Biblical Reference	Micah 5:2, Matthew 2:1, Luke 2:4-7
Key Verse	Psalms 139:1-3
Key Concept	God knows all things.
Educational Objectives	At the end of the class today, the children will be able to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Show a map of the route that Joseph and Mary took to Bethlehem 2. Name the prophets that gave signs of the coming Messiah 3. Say from memory one of the prophecies about the coming Messiah

Life Application

The fact that the prophecies about the coming Messiah have been fulfilled should give us security to know that God always fulfills the promises given. To name Bethlehem as the birth place, God was giving information that would be used by the wise men over 400 years later to find where the new born king was born. It is fascinating to study prophecies and see how God has fulfilled them. Seeing the fulfillment of these prophecies helps us to put our faith in God through Jesus Christ. Today they will see why Bethlehem was chosen as the birth place for Jesus. Today we have the guidance of the Holy Spirit to be able to find the pieces of information that will help us to understand these truths.

Possible Activities and Class Plan

Activity	Materials	Time
My GROW Adventure	GROW Adventure materials	5 minutes
Opening Prayer	Candle	1 minute
Bible Reading	Bible	5 minutes
Activity – Where I was born		5 minutes
Bible story	Bible, illustrations, map	15 minutes
Hidden Picture		10 minutes
Craft	Colored paper, pieces of fabric, glue, yarn, markers	15 minutes
My GROW Adventure	Review	5 minutes
Closing Prayer	Candle	1 minute

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INSTRUCTIONS

My GROW Adventure with God Weekly Review: As children enter take time to have them reflect on their adventure with God booklets and either discuss or use art materials to express their journey during the past week. You may wish to add any art work, written poems, prayers or songs to a GROW wall in the room. You can find my GROW Adventure with God materials on the Covchurch.org website in the same place as the Adventures with God sessions.

Opening Prayer: Gather children around a candle. Light the candle and explain that we are entering into a special time with God. Encourage the children to hold their hands out in front of them palms up as a sign they are ready to receive what God has for them today.

Prayer Example: Lord God, thank you for making us, for loving us, for forgiving us, and guiding us. We know you are here with us right now. As we enter into your word, the Bible, help us draw close to you, to understand and to listen to what you have to say to us. Amen

(For safety sake, you may wish to extinguish the candle after the prayer)

Bible Reading: Explain that as we read the Bible we do that first to spend time with God. Children can remain with hands out stretched palms up to receive the word as it's being read. Alternatively they can be invited to draw what they hear. Read the key verse Bible passage for the day two times and ask children to respond.

Question examples: What did you notice in this Psalm? How does it make you feel? Was there anything you would ask God about that you didn't understand or was confusing? Is God saying anything to you though the passage?

Activity: As the children arrive they can begin working on the tangram that they began the week before. Have them continue to make the figures, gluing each one on a piece of white paper. Next week they will glue them on poster board to make a nativity scene and take them home. When everyone has arrived and they've had time to work on their tangrams, gather them together and read the story you will find in this lesson. Then, each student will write a conclusion to the story (if there's time they can make a drawing.) When all of the conclusions are written, you can staple them together and make a book of conclusions.

Ask the children to share what town they were born in. Ask them if they know anything about the town. Based on the Psalm they reflected on, ask if they believe God knew where they would be born?

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Bible Story: To begin the story today, give a copy of the map you find in the following pages to each child. Explain to the children – that today we will discover that God revealed the place of Jesus birth 400 years before he was born. Have the children draw a line from Nazareth to Bethlehem and talk about the distance between the two (80 miles) and how people traveled in those days by foot, donkey, etc. (they could also try to guess the distance if they have maps in their Bibles). Then read the prophecy that is in Micah 5:2 and the verses that indicate where Jesus was born (Matthew 2:1 and Luke 2:4-7). Share with them the fact that it was the passage from Micah where Herod's chief priests found the answer for the wise men, when they asked where the Savior was to be born. With this information, the star guided them to the exact place in Bethlehem where Jesus was born.

Ask them how they feel about God knowing all things. Assure them that God knows all the good and the bad things about us, and still loves. We know this because God made us – God sent his Son Jesus to die for our sin and is with us always as the Holy Spirit.

Hidden Picture: Together repeat the prophecies and the fulfillment passages that you have taken off of the hidden picture so far. Then, the children can find the pieces to take off for today. Repeat these verses together too. Talk about what they see so far in the hidden picture.

Craft: Give the children time to work on a craft that you will find in the following pages.

Today's GROW Adventure with God Review:

G: God's Word: What is the story? (give children an opportunity to express their understanding of the story).

R: Relationships: Is there anything in today's bible story that shows us how we should or shouldn't share God's love with others? (Remind children that sometimes God uses the stories of the bible to show us how we shouldn't act toward God or others and give them a chance to consider how we might show God's love instead).

O: Outward Action: Is there anything in the bible story that shows us how we should help or serve God or others? (Explore concrete ways the children could live this out in the coming week).

W: Worship: Is there anything in the bible story that shows us how we should accept God's love for us and others? Ask: How do you feel about God? How would you like to respond to God? What would you like to say to God?

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Closing Prayer: Gather children around the candle again. As you light the candle explain that the flame is something that is present in the light and the darkness. In the same way, it reminds us that God is always with us. Is there anything anyone wishes to say to God? After children have responded, close the prayer time.

Prayer Example: Lord God, we thank you that you are always with us, and always love us. It's good to be with you. Thank you for what we have learned today. Thank you for being with us and for teaching us through the Bible. Help us to remember what you have taught us today and to live it out when we leave. Amen

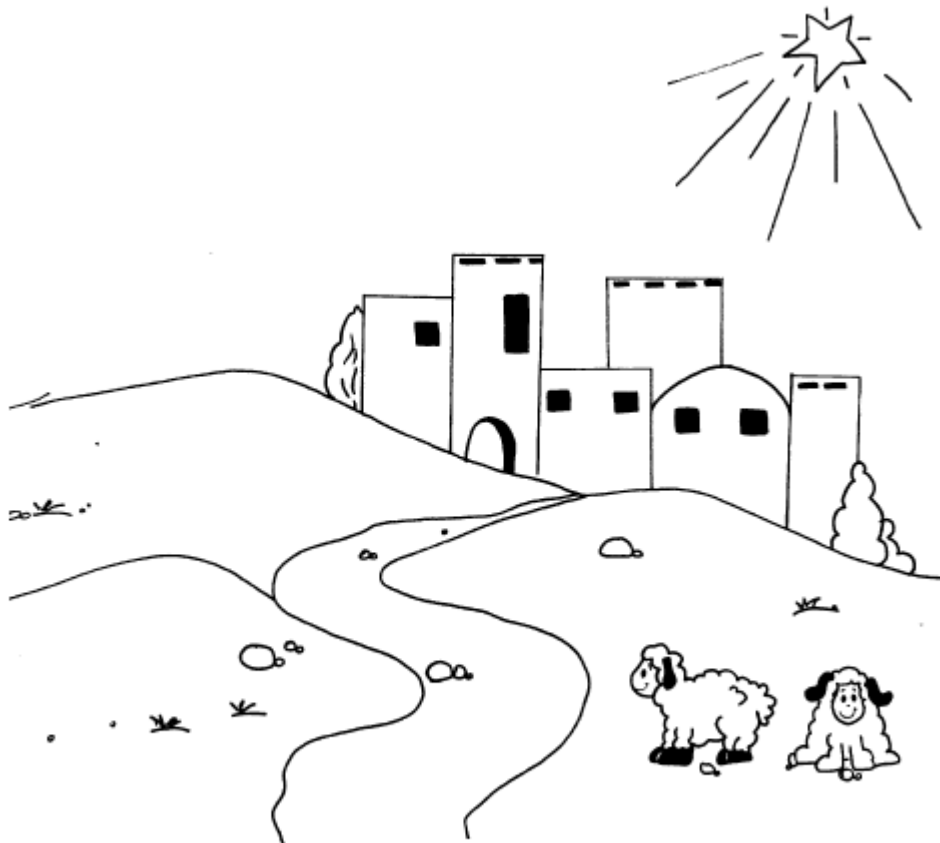
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CRAFT

The hills of Bethlehem

Many books and Christmas cards show the buildings of Bethlehem in the distance, amidst the hills. The children can make an illustration of the hills of Bethlehem using yarn, cotton, pieces of fabric, markers, etc.

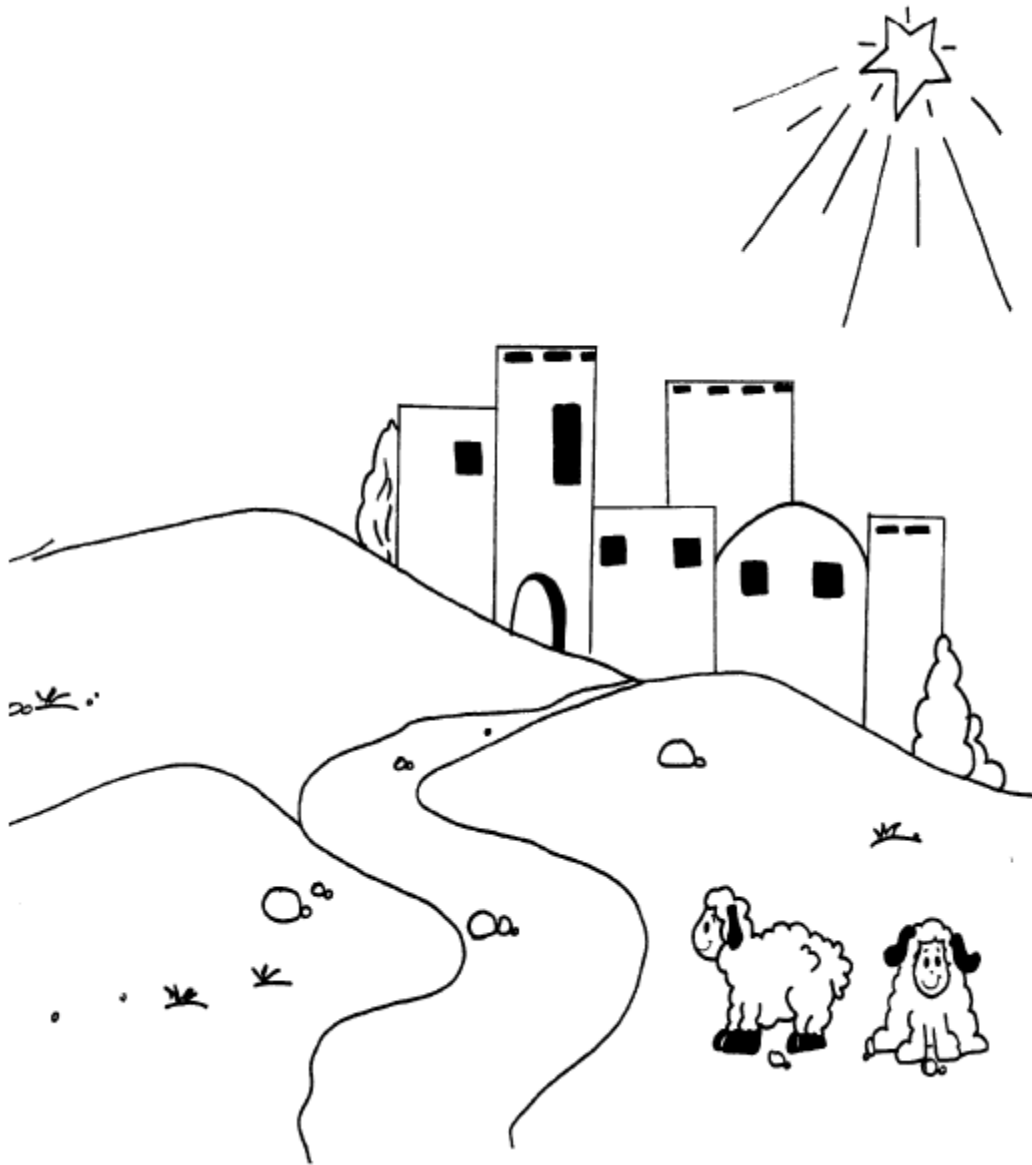
Make an example using some of the materials mentioned, as well as glue and colored paper. You can have some Christmas cards available to give them ideas or use the illustration below.



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ILLUSTRATION

Scenes for the story



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MAP

