

Kindy suggested scripture story (see p. 72-76 for Wonder Questions) <i>* Indicates a script that is attached below</i>	Props needed	Bible Box inclusions
* The Annunciation (Luke 1:26-38)	Underlay – purple or beige People – Mary, angel Other props – grey pathway	PEOPLE – <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
* The Visitation (Luke 1:39-45)	Underlay – purple People – Mary, another woman Other props – block to make two homes, grey pathway	
An Angel Appears to Joseph (Matthew 1:18-25)	Underlay – purple People – Joseph, angel Other props – small brown rectangle as a sleeping mat	
* The Nativity - Journey to Bethlehem (Luke 2:1-20)	Underlay – purple People – Mary, Joseph, baby Jesus, shepherds, angels Other props – donkey, blocks to make towns of Bethlehem and Nazareth, manger (small matchbox -sized box), hay (raffia), blocks to make house they stayed in, thin white strips to wrap Jesus in, sheep,	UNDERLAYS/PATHS – <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
* The Visit of the Magi (Matthew 2:1-12) (Snip & Tell)	Underlay – purple People – Wise Men, Mary, Joseph, baby Jesus Other props – grey path, blocks to make house they stayed in, manger (small matchbox -sized box), hay (raffia), outline of Bethlehem, 3 gifts	
Baby Jesus is Brought to the Temple (Luke 2:22-38)		PROPS – <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
* Jesus in the Temple (Luke 2:41-52)	Underlay – green People – Mary, Joseph, child Jesus, men, women and children Other props – grey path, outline of Jerusalem (https://ceob.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/Jerusalem2DImages.pdf)	
* Jesus' Baptism (Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11 or Luke 3:21-22) (Bible Storybags)	Underlay – purple People – Jesus, John the Baptist, other men, women and children Other props – blue felt for Sea of Galilee, brown felt for surrounds, dove	
* Jesus Calls the Disciples (Matthew 4:18-23 OR Mark 1: 16-20) (Bible Storybags)	Underlay – green People – disciples, Jesus, other men, women and children Other props – blue felt for Sea of Galilee, brown felt for surrounds, netting, boat	
Casting Nets (Luke 5:1-11)	Underlay – green People – disciples, Jesus Other props – blue felt for Sea of Galilee, brown felt for surrounds, netting, boat, fish	
The Wedding at Cana (John 2:1-11)	Underlay – green People – Jesus, Mary, disciples, other men, women and children Other props – 6 water jars	
* Jesus Calms a Storm (Luke 8:22-25; Matthew 8:23-27 or Mark 4:35-41) (Bible Storybags)	Underlay – green People – some disciples, Jesus Other props – blue felt for Sea of Galilee, brown felt for surrounds, boat	
Jesus Walks on Water (Matthew 14:22-33)	Underlay – green People – some disciples, Jesus Other props – blue felt for Sea of Galilee, brown felt for surrounds, boat	

Five Loaves and Two Fish (John 6:1-14; Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:30-44 or Luke 9:10-17)	<i>Underlay – green People – some disciples, Jesus, men, women and children Other props – blue felt for Sea of Galilee, brown felt for surrounds, 5 loaves of bread, 2 fish, 12 baskets</i>	
The Great Commandment (Mark 12:28-34; Luke 10:25-28 or Matthew 22:34-40)		PEOPLE – <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
* Jesus Blesses the Children (Mark 20:13-16; Matthew 19:13-15 or Luke 18:15-17) (Clip & Tell)	<i>Underlay – green People – some disciples, Jesus, men, women and children Other props – grey pathway</i>	
* Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10) (Snip & Tell)	<i>Underlay – purple People – Jesus, men, women and children, Zacchaeus -short man Other props – grey pathway, tree</i>	
Jesus Heals a Leper (Matthew 8:1-4; Mark 1:40-45 or Luke 5:12-16)	<i>Underlay – purple People – Jesus, men, women and children, leper man Other props – grey pathway</i>	UNDERLAYS/PATHS – <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
* The Lost Sheep (Luke 15:1-10 or Matthew 18:10-14) (Bible Storybags)	<i>Underlay – green People – shepherd Other props – brown felt shapes to look like stones for enclosure, wolf, black felt shape for the dangerous place, sheep, blue felt shape for water</i>	
The Sower (Matthew 13:1-9; Mark 4:1-9 or Luke 8:4-8)	<i>Underlay – long gold/cream felt People – picture of a sower Other props – brown felt pathway for ground, picture of birds, rocks, picture of thorny bushes, picture of a large tree</i>	
* Jesus Heals a Blind Man (Mark 8:22-25) (Snip & Tell)	<i>Underlay – green People – Jesus, blind man (man with bandages on eyes), men, women and children Other props – grey pathway</i>	PROPS – <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Jesus Teaches his Disciples to Pray (Luke 11:1-4 or Matthew 6:9-15)		
Jesus Praying on a Mountain (Mark 6:46)		
Jesus Teaching on a Mountain (Matthew 5:1-2)		
The Kingdom of God is Like a Mustard Seed (Matthew 13:31-32; Mark 4:30-32 or Luke 13:18-19)	<i>Underlay – gold People – Other props – picture of a large tree, birds and nests</i>	
* Jesus Enters Jerusalem – Palm Sunday (Matthew 21: 1-11; Mark 11:1-10; John 12:12-15 or Luke 19:28-40) (Learning Links to Religious Education in Early Childhood)	<i>Underlay – purple People – Jesus, men, women and children Other props –grey pathway, outline of Jerusalem (https://ceob.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/Jerusalem2DImages.pdf), small pieces of material for cloaks, small plastic or real leaves, donkey</i>	
* Last Supper (Matthew 26:26-30 OR Mark 14:22-26)	<i>Underlay – white People – 12 disciples, Jesus Other props – eating mat (small rectangular piece of brown felt), wine chalice, bread.</i>	
Crucifixion of Jesus (John 19:1-29; Matthew 27:15-56; Mark 15:6-41 or Luke 23:13-49)		
* The Resurrection (Matthew 28:1-10; Mark 16:1-8; Luke 24:1-12 or John 20:1-10) (Bible Storybags)	<i>Underlay – white People – Mary, another woman, an angel, 2 guards, some disciples, Jesus Other props – cave tomb with a stone cover, grey pathway</i>	

THE ANNUNCIATION

(Luke 1:26-38)

BACKGROUND

The Gospel writer Luke prepares us to hear the story of the annunciation of Jesus' birth by placing it immediately after the account of the annunciation of John the Baptist, child of Elizabeth and Zechariah. The extraordinary element in that story was that John would be born to elderly parents. In the story of Mary we see something more wondrous, the action of the Holy Spirit in the birth of Jesus to a virgin – a young girl already betrothed but as yet unmarried.

The figure of Gabriel links the two stories. The archangel is a messenger of God's Good News. Gabriel shows us where to look for God's presence: in a virgin, in an obscure and lowly town called Nazareth. Mary becomes the symbol of the lowly and the poor who figure significantly in Luke's Gospel. In this text a key interaction is between Mary and Gabriel. This encounter reveals to us the action of the Holy Spirit. Mary's initial reaction to the news the angel brings is one of surprise and questioning. Through Mary's questioning she receives reassurance "nothing is impossible to God" (v.37). Mary's "yes" is no passive submission. It is a free response to God's initiative which prepares the way for the Incarnation: the birth of Jesus, Son of God.

Mary's relationship with God is one of mutual faithfulness. For Luke, Mary personifies those who "hear the Word of God and put it into practice" (Luke 8:20–21), those who co-operate with God's activity in their lives and who rejoice in it, those who ponder the ways of God (Luke 2:20,50), those who are faithful in times of trouble and who triumph over them (Luke 2:34–35).

YOU WILL NEED:

- Beige (or purple, if telling the story during Advent) felt underlay
- 3 D Figures: Mary and Angel Gabriel (could be from a Nativity set or peg figures)
- Bible
- Empty crib (if telling the story during Advent)

Children are seated in a semi-circle ready to listen to the story. Place class Bible, open at Luke, in front of you with your hand on it. Place the Bible in front of you with your hand on it.

This story comes from our special book which we call the Bible. It is about a girl who had a most unexpected visitor.
Place the Bible beside you.

Lay the purple/beige cloth in the middle of the space.

Purple is the colour for getting ready. Advent is a time for getting ready. During Advent we are getting ready to celebrate Christmas.

Place Mary on the cloth.

This is Mary.

Place angel on the cloth facing Mary. Place your hand behind the angel as you say:

God sent an angel called Gabriel to ask Mary to be the mother of Jesus.

Angels are God's special messengers.

Move the angel Gabriel a little way towards Mary.

The angel Gabriel told Mary not to be afraid, because God was very near to her.

Move Mary to stand beside the angel.

Mary said, "Yes, I will do whatever God wants."

Pause and sit with the story for a while before engaging the students with some 'I wonder' statements from the Bible stories section of the Let the Little Children Come to Me webpage.

Carefully pack story materials into storage box and place on the prayer space or investigation table for students to retell the story.

THE VISITATION

(Luke 1:39-45)

BACKGROUND

The story of the visitation is a woman's story. Two unknown and seemingly ordinary women of the first century meet during their pregnancies for mutual support. Mary the younger one, just pregnant with her first child, goes to the older woman who is in a similar condition. It misses Luke's intent if Mary is presented simply as rushing to aid Elizabeth in her pregnancy. The focus seems to be on the two mothers-to-be coming together to praise the marvelous activity of God in both their lives. Elizabeth's child, John, leaps in his mother's womb as Mary greets Elizabeth. He is the one who will prepare people to recognize and receive the promised one. Elizabeth, whom we are told is filled with the Holy Spirit responds by telling Mary that she is blessed and the child in her womb is blessed. Elizabeth praises Mary for trusting in God. Elizabeth's words point to Mary as the model believer. The writer here is underscoring his jubilee theme that the blessing of God is poured out on ordinary, even unlikely people. In this case, one who appears too old and one who is very young.

YOU WILL NEED:

- Beige felt underlay
- Brown felt road
- 3 D Figures: Mary and pregnant Elizabeth
- Bible

Children are seated in a semi-circle ready to listen to the story.

Place class Bible, open at Luke, in front of you with your hand on it.

This story comes from the Gospel according to Luke, which is in the New Testament section of the Bible.

Place Bible beside you.

Lay underlay and then the road. Place Mary on the road near you. Place Elizabeth at the opposite end of the underlay, to the side of the road.

Move Mary along the road as you say:

Mary left her home in Nazareth and travelled in haste to Judea. She was going to visit her cousin, Elizabeth who lived with her husband, Zechariah.

Move Mary off the road just a little way and say

Upon entering the house, Mary greeted Elizabeth.

Move Elizabeth towards Mary.

When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby within her moved.

Place your hand over Mary as you say:

Filled with the Holy Spirit, Elizabeth exclaimed, "Mary, blessed are you among women! And blessed is the baby growing within you!"

Place your hand behind Elizabeth as you say:

"I cannot believe that the mother of my Lord would visit me!"

Place your hand over Mary's head and say:

"Blessed are you Mary, because you believed the angel's message and you faithfully trust in God!"

Pause and sit with the story for a while before engaging the students with some 'I wonder' statements from the Bible stories section of the Let the Little Children Come to Me webpage.

Carefully pack story materials into storage box and place on the prayer space or investigation table for students to retell the story.

THE NATIVITY – JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM

(based on Luke 2:1-20)

YOU WILL NEED

- Bible
- beige or pale yellow underlay
- road the same length as the underlay
- Bethlehem outline (laminated and fold into thirds to help stand)
- Nativity set

Children are seated in a semi-circle ready to listen to the story.

Place the Bible in front of you with your hand on it.

This story comes from our special book which we call the Bible.

Place the underlay in the middle of the space.

Place the road on top of the underlay. Place the Bethlehem outline at the end of the road, away from you.

Place Mary, Joseph and donkey on the road at the closest end to you.

When the time came for Jesus to be born, Mary and Joseph had to go to Bethlehem.

Slowly move Mary, Joseph and donkey halfway down the road.

Place your hand at the opposite end of the road to Mary and Joseph.

Bethlehem was a long way from their home.

Continue to slowly move Mary, Joseph and donkey down the road to Bethlehem.

When they arrived the town was very crowded.

Move Mary, Joseph and donkey from the road to an area near Bethlehem and hold your hand over the space.

The only place Mary and Joseph could find to stay was with the animals in someone's house.

Place Jesus in the manger between Mary and Joseph.

In this warm and noisy place Jesus was born.

Place shepherds and sheep on the underlay away from the road and the stable.

Nearby some very poor shepherds were looking after their sheep.

Place an angel near shepherds.

An angel of the Lord appeared to them and told them that Jesus had been born in a stable in Bethlehem.

Place more angels facing shepherds.

That night God's angels sang, "Glory to God in the highest and peace on earth."

Move angels to your side. Move shepherds to the stable.

The shepherds went to the stable to see Jesus. They saw Mary and Joseph and the baby Jesus lying in the manger.

The shepherds were the only other people who came to see Jesus, the Son of God, on the night he was born.

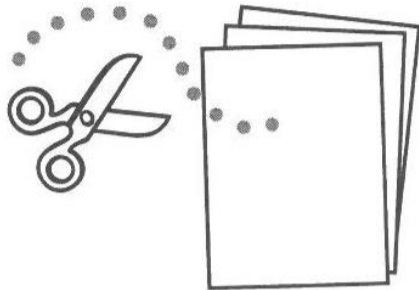
Pause and sit with the story for a while before engaging the students with some 'I wonder' statements from the Bible stories section of the Let the Little Children Come to Me webpage.

Carefully pack story materials into storage box and place on the prayer space or investigation table for students to retell the story.



THE WISE MEN

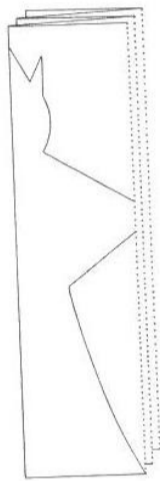
PREPARATION




You'll need scissors and one large sheet of construction paper. As you tell the story, you'll be folding the paper into six panels. Mark off the places where you'll fold the paper.


The pattern for this activity is on page 70.

THE STORY




 As you tell the first paragraph, fold the paper into six panels, accordion-style. Make sure the pattern is on top.

Wise men from the East saw the special star that God put in the sky as a sign that a new king had been born. These wise men packed gifts and traveled days and nights to get to Jerusalem so they could see this king. They went to the old king, Herod, and asked him where they could find the new king.

 Cut figure from A to B.


Herod was surprised. He didn't know about any new baby king. How do you think Herod felt when he heard there was another king in his kingdom? *Let children respond.*

King Herod asked his friends if they knew where to find the baby king. Herod's friends told him that, long ago, God had said a king was supposed to be born in Bethlehem.


 Cut figure from B to C.

King Herod sent the wise men to Bethlehem. He said, "When you find this baby king, tell me. I want to come see him, too." Do you think Herod was telling the truth? Did he really want to see the baby king? *Let children respond.*


Herod didn't like the baby king. He wanted to be the only king in the kingdom. Herod wanted the wise men to help him find the baby king so he could get rid of him.

 Cut figure from D to E.

The wise men went on to Bethlehem. They watched the special star. It led them right to the baby king.

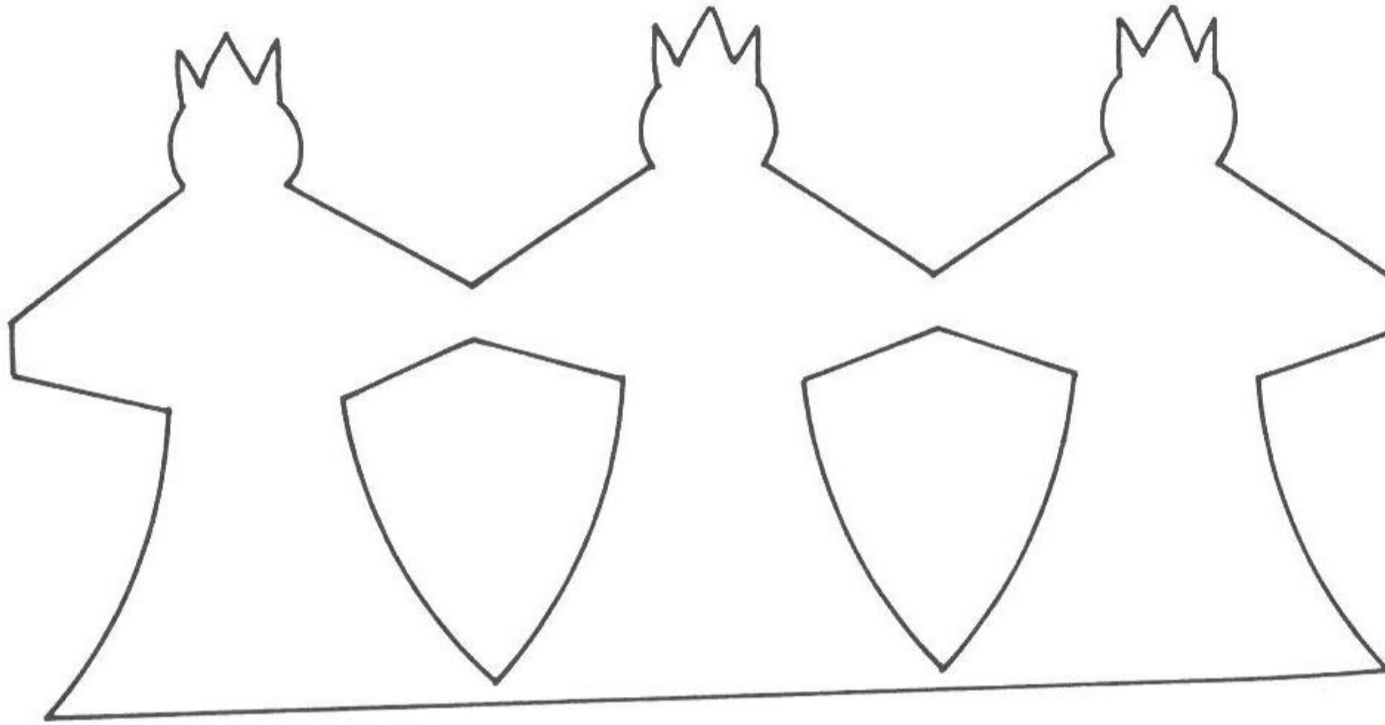
 Cut figure from E to F.

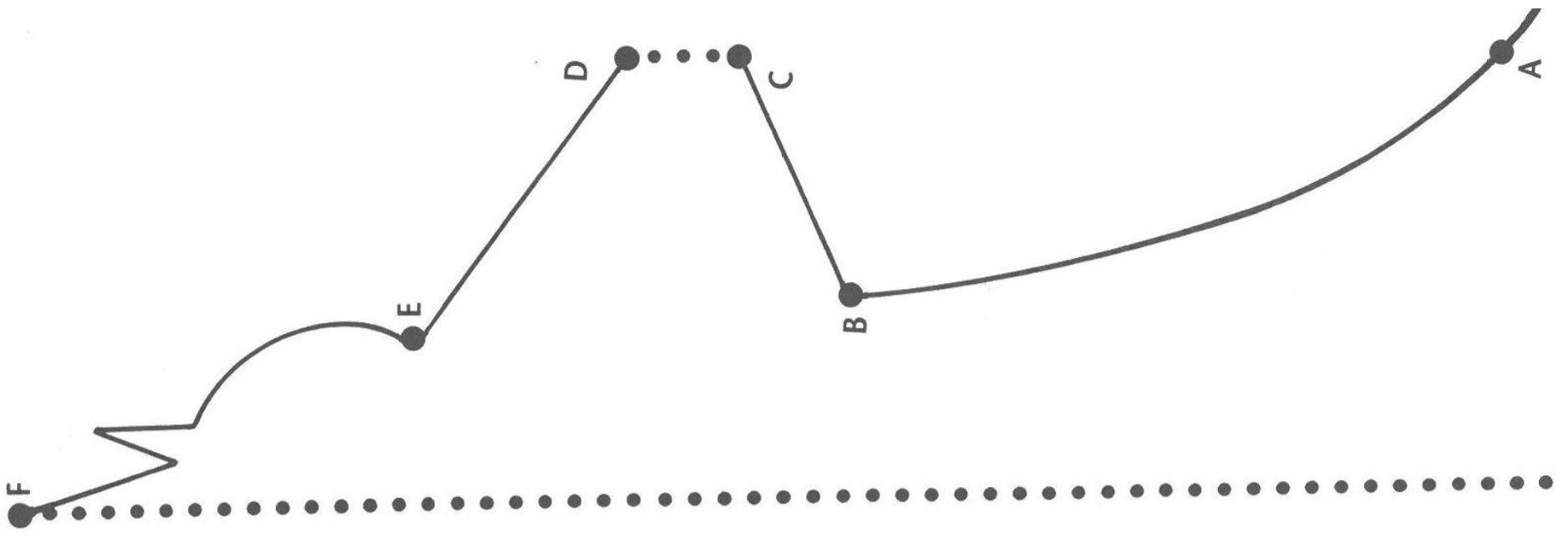
How do you think the wise men felt when they finally found the baby Jesus? How would you feel if you were one of those wise men? *Let children respond.*

 *Unfold the figure.*

The wise men were very happy. They bowed down and worshiped baby Jesus. They gave him presents of gold and incense and myrrh. What kind of present would you give to the baby Jesus? *Let children respond.*

That night, an angel warned the wise men in their dreams not to help Herod find the baby. They went back home a different way, and the baby Jesus was safe.





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JESUS LOST IN THE TEMPLE

(based on Luke 2:45-50)

BACKGROUND

When we reflect carefully on Mary, Jesus' mother, in this text we perceive her as a good Jewish woman making the yearly Passover pilgrimage to Jerusalem with her family. But when they return to Nazareth, Jesus stays behind in the Temple asking questions of and discussing with the educated men the finer points of the Law. Thus Mary and Joseph must search for and finally locate Jesus in the temple. Unexpectedly, it is Mary who speaks and questions Jesus. Mary does not understand Jesus' response to her question - "Why have you done this to us...?" (verse 48) and so again she needs to ponder (verse 52) what is happening in her life. Mary "stored up all these things in her heart" (verse 51). Mary is listening within herself in order to understand how to respond to God and her family.

YOU WILL NEED:

- beige underlay
- felt road
- Mary and Joseph from Nativity set
- Jesus as a boy
- Jerusalem outline, see props page 1 (perhaps made with building blocks, have a doorway)

Children are seated in a semi-circle ready to listen to the story.

Place the Bible in front of you with your hand on it.

This story comes from our special book which we call the Bible.

Lay the road vertically in front of you.

Place the boy, Jesus, Mary and Joseph on the side of the road near you.

Jesus grew up with Mary and Joseph in a town called Nazareth.

Place Jerusalem half way down the road, off to one side.

Move the family down the middle of the road, and then off to stand in front of Jerusalem and sweep hand towards Jerusalem..

When Jesus was twelve years old, his family and relatives went to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover. Jerusalem was a long way from Nazareth.

Walk Jesus through the doorway to stand behind Jerusalem.

Move Mary and Joseph along the road back towards you.

When the feast was ended, they started to return to Nazareth.

Turn Mary and Joseph to face each other.

On their way home, Mary and Joseph saw that Jesus was not with them and their friends and relatives.

Move Mary and Joseph back to Jerusalem. Place them on one side of the doorway to Jerusalem.

They went back to Jerusalem to look for Jesus.

Move Mary and Joseph to the other side of the doorway.

They could not find Jesus for three days.

They looked everywhere.

Move Mary and Joseph to either side of the doorway to Jerusalem.

Move Jesus from the back of Jerusalem to the doorway.

Then at last Mary and Joseph found Jesus in the temple.

They asked him why he had made them worry so much.

He said to them,

"Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?"

Pause and sit with the story for a while before engaging the students with some 'I wonder' statements from the Bible stories section of the Let the Little Children Come to Me webpage.

Carefully pack story materials into storage box and place on the prayer space or investigation table for students to retell the story.

JESUS' BAPTISM

Script 1

Unpacking the bag

*My bag is brown, the colour of earth baked by the sun.
There is a river in my bag, cool and clean.
There are people in my bag who go to the river,
and a man who speaks to them.
There is someone in my bag who comes to bring forgiveness.*

The story

Our story starts on a rough brown cloth (*hold up bag*), for it starts in a wild place where few people live (*put bag down, and smooth*). Through the wild place runs a river (*place ribbon*). A man lives there (*place John on bag*). People gather there to hear him speak about God (*place crowd on bag*). He speaks (*lift John*) of losing and finding—losing guilt and finding forgiveness. He speaks of a fresh start (*place John in river*). The people listen and follow him into the river and out again (*move crowd through river and out*). They feel the water washing their skin (*run your hand up your arm**) and they feel the forgiveness taking away their guilt (*touch heart*).

The man (*lift John*) tells them of someone who will come to bring love and forgiveness (*replace John*). Someone comes (*place Jesus on bag*) and he goes into the river (*place Jesus in river*). He does not go to lose his guilt (*shake head*), for he has done nothing wrong. He does not go to find forgiveness (*shake head*), for he is good. He goes to show the way. When he comes up from the water (*move Jesus out of river*), a voice is heard saying, 'This is my Son, my beloved Son. Listen to him.'

* If you wish, you can use water in a bottle poured out into a bowl. Adjust text as necessary.

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THE VOICE (JOHN THE BAPTIST AND JESUS' BAPTISM)

Younger
pupils



You will need:

- ❖ A rough light brown bag (hessian if possible)
- ❖ A shiny blue ribbon for the river
- ❖ 6 people: 4 crowd members, 1 John the Baptist, 1 Jesus

Questions

(See also page 11.)

- ❖ Who is the 'voice'?
- ❖ Who is the 'someone'?
- ❖ What do people lose and find?

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JESUS CALLS THE DISCIPLES

Script 1

Unpacking the bag

*My bag is light brown, the colour of sand,
the sand you find on a shore near a lake.
In my bag is water that forms a lake
and fish that swim in the water.
In my bag there are boats
and fishermen that catch fish.
In my bag are nets used to catch fish.
In my bag is a teacher who invites people to follow him.*

The story

The story starts on the sand (*place bag and smooth*). The sand is at the edge of a lake (*place blue cloth*). In the lake are fish (*place fish*). On the lake sail two boats (*place boats*). In the boats are fishermen who work to catch fish (*place two men in each boat*). The fishermen throw their nets into the water and wait for the fish to swim in (*place nets in men's hands*).

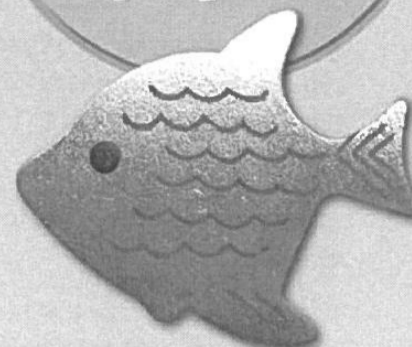
Beside the lake walks the teacher. He knows these fishermen—he has met them before (*place Jesus on bag*). He calls to the men in the first boat to leave their nets and follow him (*lower nets*). The men listen to him and follow (*remove two men from one boat and place them following Jesus*). The three men walk on, leaving footprints in the sand (*move all three figures*) and soon they come to another boat. Again the teacher calls the fishermen to follow. They listen to him and leave their nets and follow him (*remove two men from the other boat and place them following Jesus*).

The five men leave the lake; there are things to learn from the teacher (*move all figures off cloth*). There are other people he needs to invite to follow him.

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THE FOOTPRINTS (JESUS CHOOSES HIS FIRST DISCIPLES)

Younger
pupils



You will need

- ✦ A light brown bag
- ✦ Blue cloth for water
- ✦ 5 people:
 - 4 fishermen,
 - 1 Jesus
- ✦ 2 boats (small open cardboard boxes with a card boat shape stuck to the front of each)
- ✦ 2 pieces of 'net' (fruit packaging)
- ✦ Paper fish

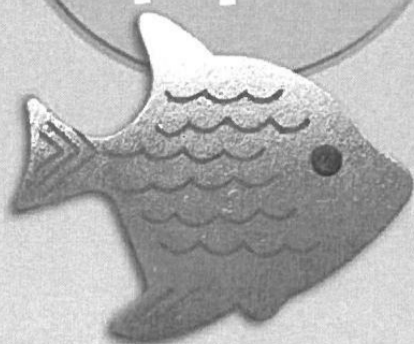
Questions

(See also page 11.)

- ⊗ Who is the teacher and what did he teach?
- ⊗ Why did people follow him?
- ⊗ Do people still follow this teacher today?

JESUS CALMS A STORM

Younger
pupils



You will need

- ❖ A dark blue bag
- ❖ 5 'people': 1 Jesus, 4 disciples
- ❖ A boat (cut down a box to make it shallow; attach a card boat shape to one side)
- ❖ (For thunder noise) A baking tray and wooden spoon
- ❖ A rain stick or shaker
- ❖ (For wind noise) A tube to swirl, or a plastic bottle to blow across or pupils' voices
- ❖ (For lightning) A torch

Questions

(See also page 11.)

- ❖ Who is the teacher?
- ❖ Why is he sleeping through the storm?
- ❖ Why are the friends puzzled?

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Script 1

Unpacking the bag

*My bag is deep blue, the colour of a stormy sea.
There is a boat in my bag that sails on the water.
There are friends in my bag who sail in the boat.
There is wind in my bag that whips up the sea.
There is thunder in my bag that rocks the earth.
There is lightning in my bag that lights the sky
and a monster storm that endangers the boat.*

The story

Our story takes place on a deep blue cloth, for this is the story of a storm at sea (*place bag and smooth*). On the sea sails a boat (*place boat*). In the boat are a group of friends (*place four disciples*). Many of the friends are fishermen; they are used to sailing (*show disciples*). The teacher is also in the boat (*add Jesus*). He is tired, very tired. He has been helping people all day, so he sleeps at the back of the boat (*lay down Jesus*).

Suddenly the wind blows hard and hits the water. The waves rise and the tiny boat is tossed by the sea (*make wind noises and bunch up cloth around boat*). The friends struggle to control the boat, but the teacher sleeps on (*head on hands to indicate sleep*). He is so tired, he is not woken by the storm.

The storm gets worse (*make wind noises*), the thunder rolls (*make thunder noises*) and the lightning cracks (*switch torch on and off*). It is a monster of a storm. Frightened for their lives, the friends wake the teacher. The teacher stands up (*stand up Jesus*). 'Peace! Be quiet!' he says to the storm. Suddenly all is calm. The wind ceases (*fade wind noise*), the thunder stops (*fade thunder noise*) and lightning no longer lights the sky. The waves die down (*smooth the cloth*).

The friends are amazed. 'Who is this man?' they say. 'He can even stop the wind and the waves.'

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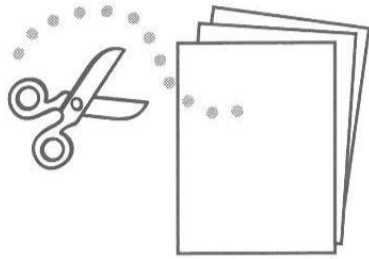
THE MONSTER (THE STORM ON THE LAKE)

JESUS BLESSES THE CHILDREN

MATTHEW 18:1-6; 19:13-15


LET THE CHILDREN COME

PREPARATION




Copy Figure 1 (Jesus) onto white paper. Copy Figure 2 (the children) onto tan paper. The patterns for this story are on pages 100 and 101. Before you tell this story, fold the tan paper accordion-style on the dotted lines.




 Fold the tan paper along the dotted lines.

 Cut the children figure from A to B.


They wanted Jesus to hold their children and pray for them. Did you ever have someone pray for you? What's that like?

 Cut the children figure from C to D.

When the disciples saw the parents and children, they said, "Don't bother Jesus now. Can't you see he's busy?"

 Cut the children figure from E to F, then from F to G.

But Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me."

 Unfold the children figure. Wrap the children around the Jesus figure.

"Don't stop them. The kingdom of heaven belongs to people who are like these children."

Then Jesus touched the children and blessed them.

Jesus still loves children today. So, if adults sometimes get busy and forget how important you are, remember that you're important to Jesus. Jesus is always ready to hear your prayers and listen when you sing praises to him.

Let's praise Jesus right now. When I count to three, let's shout, "We love you, Jesus." Ready? One, two, three! We love you, Jesus!

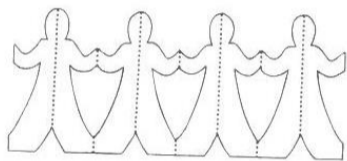
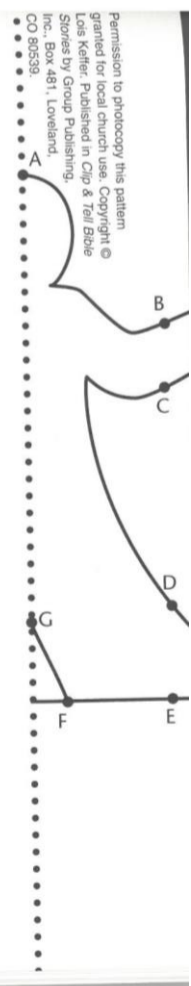


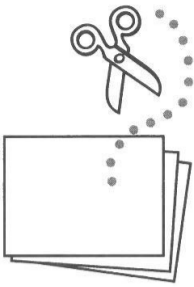
Figure 2



ZACCHAEUS

PREPARATION

You'll need scissors and one sheet of green construction paper. The pattern for this activity is on page 98.



THE STORY

▮ Fold the paper in half vertically. Zacchaeus was a tax collector. People had to give him money to give to the king. But Zacchaeus didn't give all of the people's money to the king. Zacchaeus kept some of the money for himself, and he got very rich. The people weren't happy about this. How would you feel if someone was taking your money? *Let children respond.*

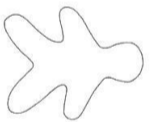
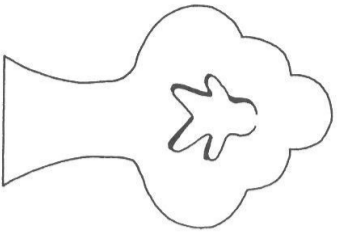
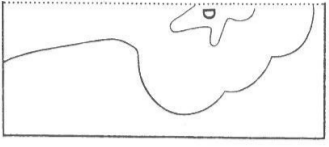
Most of the people didn't like Zacchaeus. They didn't like him one bit. Jesus was coming to the town where Zacchaeus lived. Everyone in town went out to the road where Jesus would pass. They wanted to see and hear Jesus. What would you do if Jesus came to our town? *Let children respond.*

✂ Cut figure from A to B. Zacchaeus followed the crowds of people. But he couldn't find a place to stand where he could see.

✂ Cut figure from B to C. Zacchaeus was a very short man, and everyone else was standing in front of him. Have you ever tried to see over a crowd of people? What was it like? *Let children respond.*

No one would let Zacchaeus get through so he could see. **✂** Cut out section D, leaving a small portion attached at the top. Then Zacchaeus saw a tall tree nearby. So guess what he did. He climbed up in the tree so he could see over all the people.

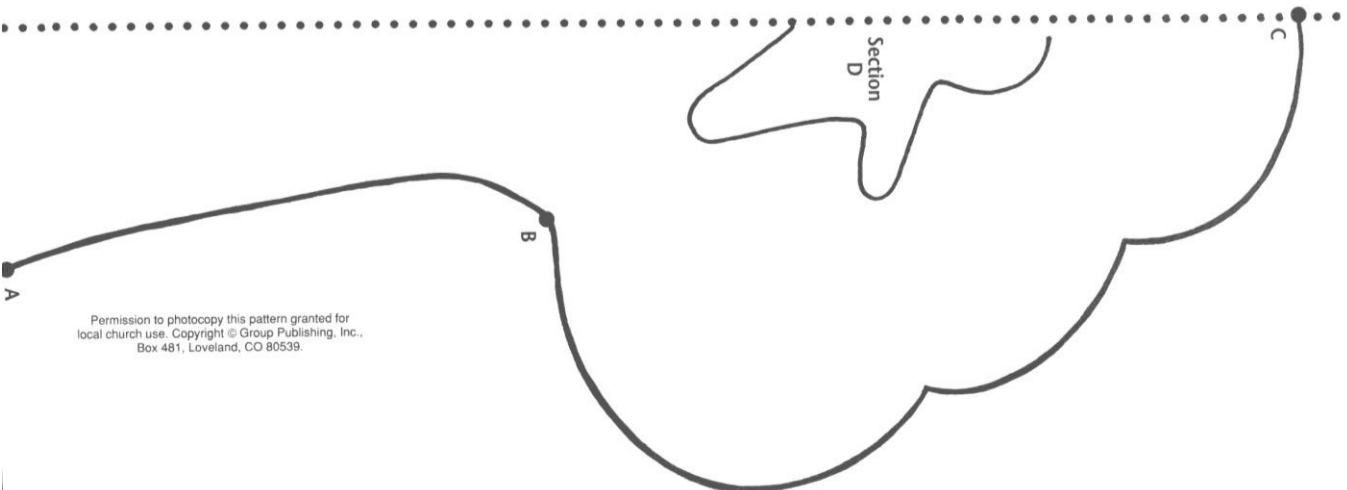
▮ Open the figure to show Zacchaeus in the tree. The tree was a perfect place to watch Jesus pass. Soon Zacchaeus could see Jesus coming. When Jesus got close to the tree where Zacchaeus was, he looked up at Zacchaeus. He said, "Come down, Zacchaeus. I want to come over to your house and spend some time with you." How would it feel if you were Zacchaeus and Jesus found you in a tree? *Let children respond.* Zacchaeus was surprised. But he came down quickly.



✂ Gently and quickly tear off the Zacchaeus figure and bring him down from the tree.

Zacchaeus and Jesus walked together to his house. As he was talking to Jesus, Zacchaeus decided to change his ways. He said, "I'll pay back all the money that I took from the people." How do you think Jesus felt when Zacchaeus decided to give the money back? *Let children respond.*

Jesus said, "Zacchaeus, this is a great day, because you have decided to do what's right."



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THE LOST SHEEP

Script 1

Unpacking the bag

*My bag is green, the colour of grass.
There is blue in my bag, the blue of water on a summer's day.
There is a bush in my bag, sharp and prickly.
There is a deep pool that is dark and dangerous.
There is a shepherd in my bag who looks after his sheep.
There are sheep with soft wool.
There is a sheepfold in my bag—a fence to keep the sheep safe.
There is red in my bag. I wonder what it is for?
There is a party in my bag, for this is a story of joy.*

The story

Our story takes place on a green cloth, for this story starts in a field (*place bag and smooth*). Through the field runs a gentle stream of water (*place ribbon*). In the field is a shepherd (*place shepherd*) and his sheep (*place sheep*). To keep the sheep safe, the shepherd builds a sheepfold (*move shepherd, place fold*). The sheepfold is a fenced place to keep the sheep from harm.

The shepherd leads the sheep to the water (*move shepherd and sheep near water*) and checks for dangers. He finds a deep, dark pool (*place pool, move shepherd*). The sheep must not go there! He finds a prickly bush (*place bush, move shepherd*). The sheep must not go there!

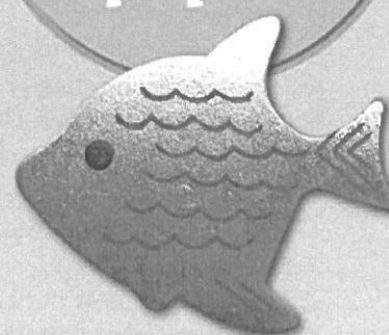
At night the shepherd places the sheep in the sheepfold to keep them safe (*place shepherd by fold and place all but one of the sheep in the sheepfold*). One night he notices one of his sheep is missing (*place one sheep behind the bush*). One sheep has not come in when called.

The shepherd goes in search of his sheep. He looks in the field (*move shepherd around field*). The sheep is not there! He looks by the stream (*go to the stream*). The sheep is not there! He looks in the deep, dark pool (*go to the pool*). The sheep is not there! Finally, he looks by the prickly bush and finds the sheep caught by its wool (*go to the bush*). Carefully he lifts out the sheep, and his hands are scratched by the thorns (*add scratches with face paint*). He carries the sheep home (*place the sheep in the sheepfold*) and throws a party with his friends, for he is glad to have found his sheep that was lost (*throw streamers; give safe party items to children to join in*).

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THE SHEPHERD (THE GOOD SHEPHERD AND LOST SHEEP)

Younger pupils



You will need

- ✦ A green bag
- ✦ 1 shepherd
- ✦ A few toy sheep
- ✦ A sheepfold from a play farm (or cut from a small cardboard box)
- ✦ A prickly bush (screwed-up green tissue, with some twisted points)
- ✦ Shiny blue ribbon for the stream
- ✦ A small irregular circle of dark cloth for a deep pool
- ✦ Children's red face-paint crayon
- ✦ Safe party items (e.g. streamers)

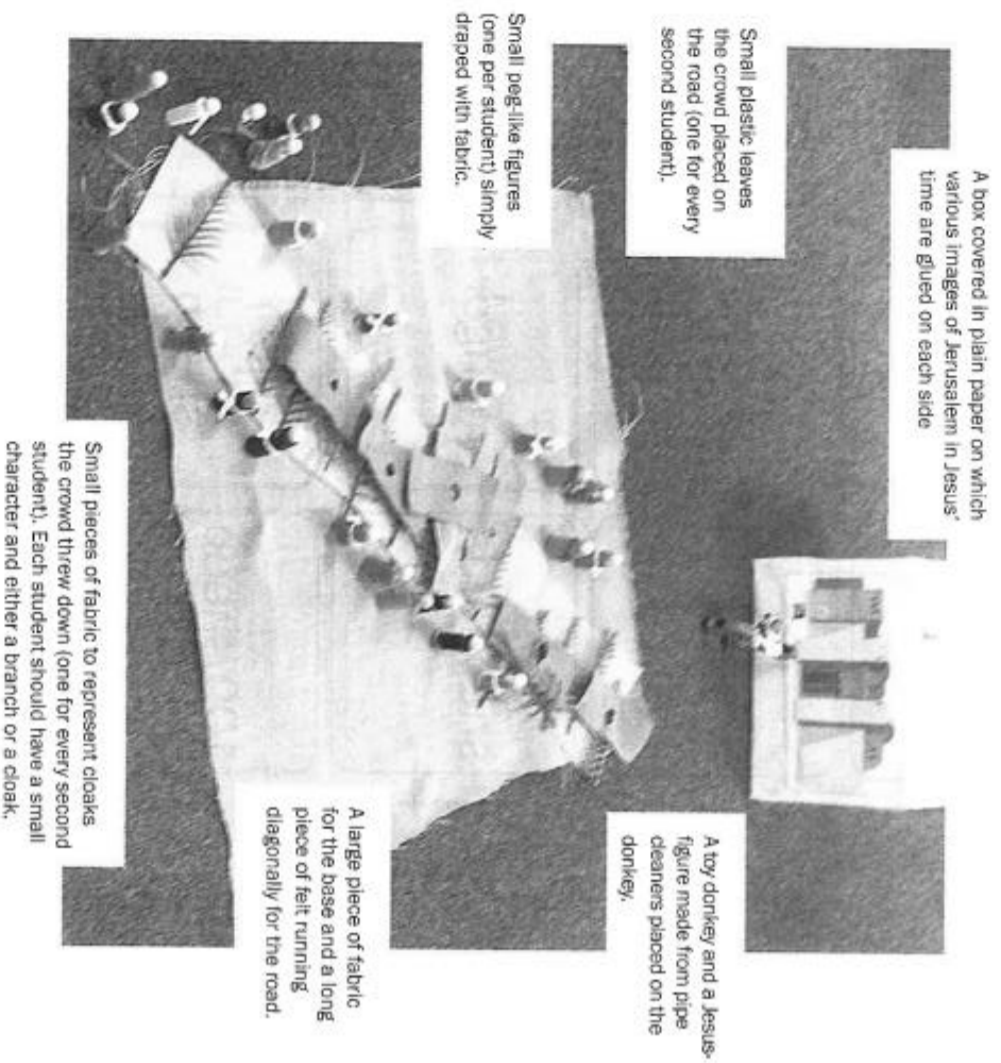
Questions

(See also page 11.)

- ✦ Who is the shepherd?
- ✦ Who are the sheep?
- ✦ Why did the sheep wander off?
- ✦ Why did the shepherd look for just one sheep?

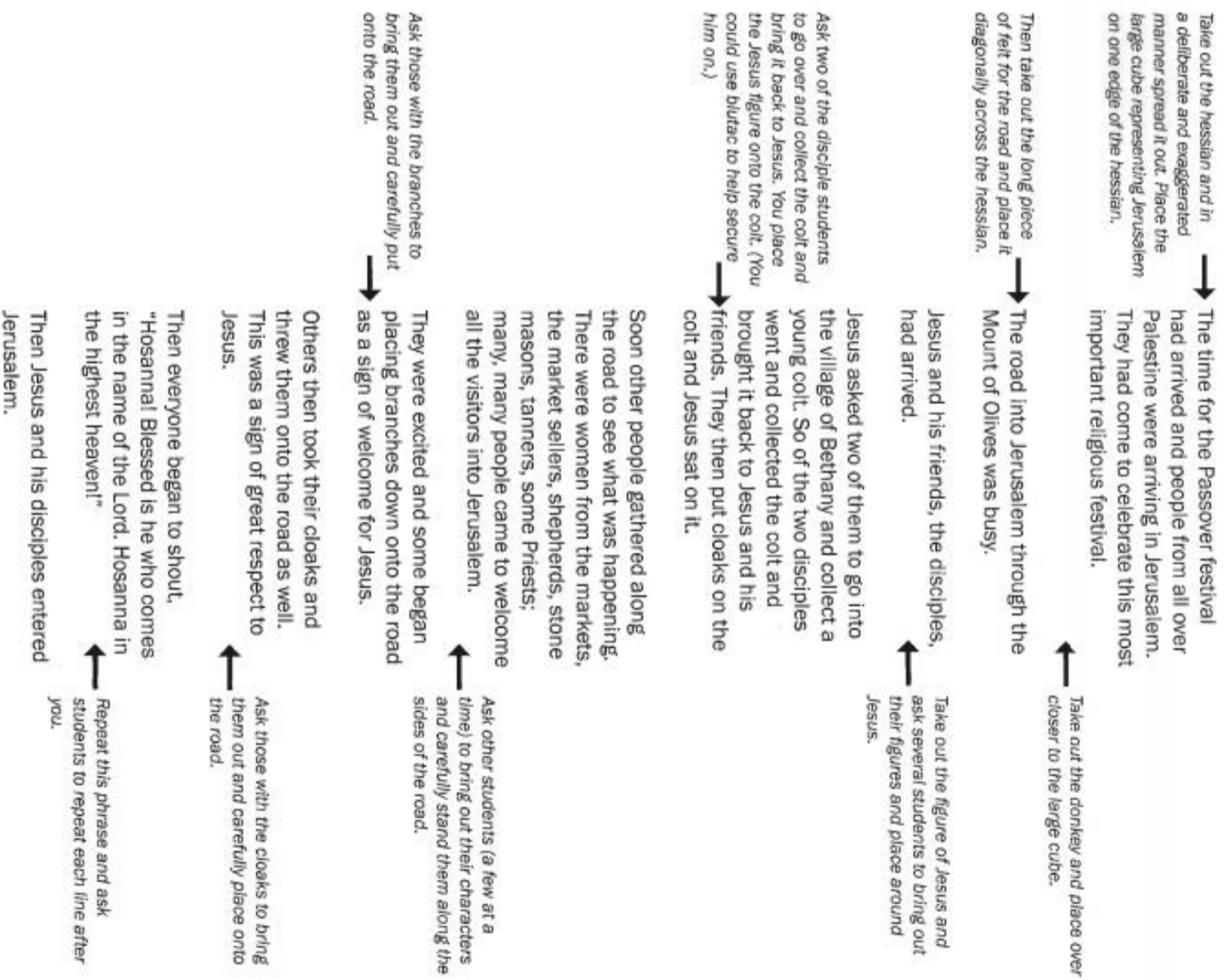
Holy Week: Palm Sunday Presentation Preparation

An ideal place to begin an exploration of the Easter story with early years students is the scripture of Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem. This incident is found in all four gospels: Mark 11:1-11; Matthew 21:1-11; Luke 19:28-40; and John 12:12-19. Most details in all four are quite similar and the following account is an adaptation of them. Prepare the following props to accompany the telling of the story:



Place all of these props (except the large Jerusalem cube) into a gift box.

Story Script: Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem



Telling the Story: Jesus' Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem

Gather students into a circle and have the cube and the gift box in front of you. Pick up the large cube with images of Jerusalem and introduce the story by saying that today's Bible story is set in Jerusalem which is a big city in Israel. It has always been an important city, and in Jesus' time it was the centre of the Jewish religion. Each year many people would come from all over Palestine for the Passover and this is why Jesus had come to Jerusalem with his friends, the disciples.

Point to the images you have glued onto each face of the cube ensuring that students are able to glean tangible understandings of this city. Helpful images would include an overview of the city in these times showing the wall that was all around it, an image of the Temple as it was, one of the gates that led through the wall, some images of typical houses during this time, and so on.

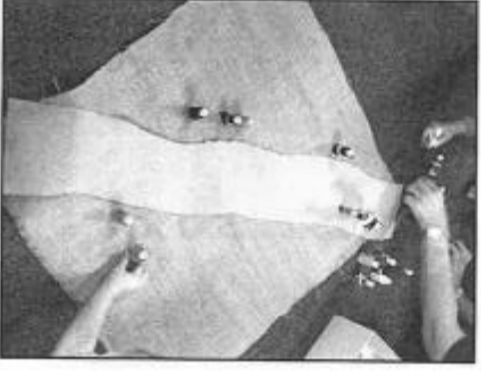
Then open your gift box. Explain that the students are going to help you tell the story today as they will build it as you go through each part. Ask if they agree to do this. Then begin by taking out the small figures representing the crowd. Hand these out to the students. Explain that some would be shepherds, others might be market sellers, others would be farmers, others would be women who were on their way to the markets, and so on.

Then take out the branches and explain that people often used these to wave during important festivals. Sometimes people would lay them on the path or road so that the person travelling on the road would be welcomed. This was often done for important people such as kings. Give these to every second student.

Next take out the small pieces of fabric and explain that they are cloaks. Explain that cloaks were very important for people living in these times as it protected them from the burning hot sun and also from the cold days during winter. If they had to sleep outside at night it also served as a blanket. Hand these out to every second student.

Now we are ready to begin the story. Listen carefully for your cue so that you are ready to add your character to the story when I say and then when to bring your branch or cloak to the story. Begin telling your story.

At the end of the story, teach students the Palm Sunday Rap and have them say it with you using the actions.



THE LAST SUPPER

YOU WILL NEED:

- white underlay
- a short table or small eating mat
- Jesus
- 12 disciples
- chalice
- bread

Children are seated in a semi-circle ready to listen to the story.

Place the Bible in front of you with your hand on it.

This story comes from our special book which we call the Bible.

Place the white cloth on the floor/table in front of you. Place the table, and place Jesus and the Apostles around it. Place the bread and the chalice on the table.

In the evening Jesus and the twelve went through the dark and narrow streets. They climbed upstairs in a house. They went into the upper room and shared their last supper together.

Pick up the bread and then place it back on the table.

After they had eaten, Jesus did something different from usual. He took some bread, gave thanks to God for it, broke it and shared it with his friends.

Then he said something like, 'When you share the bread like this, I will be there.'

Pick up the chalice and then place it back on the table.

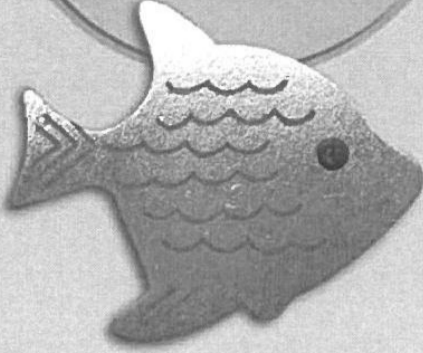
Then he took a cup of wine, gave thanks to God for it and shared it with them. Then he said something like, 'When you share the wine like this, I will be there.' 'Do this in memory of me.'

Pause and sit with the story for a while before engaging the students with some 'I wonder' statements from the Bible stories section of the Let the Little Children Come to Me webpage.

Carefully pack story materials into storage box and place on the prayer space or investigation table for students to retell the story.

THE RESURRECTION

Younger
pupils



You will need

- ❖ A gold bag
- ❖ Grey ribbon for the road
- ❖ Silver paper tears
- ❖ 4 'people':
3 women,
1 angel
- ❖ A circular margarine tub with separate lid for the grave-tomb (both covered in brown tissue)

Questions

(See also page 11.)

- ❖ Why are the women crying?
- ❖ How was sadness changed to joy?
- ❖ Why is it called 'the day of all days'?

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Script 1

Unpacking the bag

*My bag is gold, the colour of joy.
There is a road in my bag that is grey, the colour of sadness.
There is a grave-tomb in my bag that is closed with a stone.
There are women in my bag who are sad, for they have lost a friend.
There are tears in my bag, for the women are crying.
There is an angel in my bag who brings good news.*

The story

Our story starts on a gold cloth, the colour of joy, for this is a story of sadness turned to joy (*place bag and smooth*). Across our cloth runs a grey road (*place road*). It ends in a grave-tomb (*place closed tomb*). Along the road walk three women (*place women on road*). The women cry as they walk. They are sad, for their friend has died (*sprinkle some tears*).

Slowly the women walk along the road (*move women*), but when they reach the grave-tomb they find the stone door open (*open tomb*). An angel stands at the tomb (*place angel*). The angel brings a message of good news. The friend they thought was dead is alive! The women run down the road to pass the message on (*move women quickly down the road*). This is a joyful day, the day of all days.

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THE BEGINNING (THE RESURRECTION)