

Christmas: God Sends a Savior

Make It Stick: Luke 1:49: **For He that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is His name.** (Short version is in bold.)

The Big Buzz: Jesus, God's Son, came to earth as a baby. Jesus' birth fulfilled the promise God made to send a Savior.

HONEY FROM THE COMB

Read: Isaiah 9:6-7; Luke 1:26-56; Luke 2:1-20

Memorize: Luke 1:49

What is your favorite Christmas memory? This time of year brings opportunities to pause and reflect on that favorite present you received as a child, that humorous holiday fiasco or a fondly remembered loved one who has passed. Memories are precious, priceless gifts that we can cherish forever.

Luke's Gospel records that Mary was so moved by the birth of her Son — our Savior — that she *kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart (Luke 2:19)*. She specifically chose to remember and reflect on all the precious details surrounding His birth. She remembered the details so well that she was able to recount them either directly to the Gospel writer, Luke, or to another source, likely one of the apostles. Now her memories are preserved for all time.

On this special Cubbies night, you get to share these wonderful events pondered by Mary. Tell this Christmas story with enthusiasm. Help Cubbies to sense the hope and joy that Jesus' birth offers. Jesus came to save us from our sins! Jesus came to make it possible for us to know God right now and then live forever with Him in heaven! Like Mary, we should praise God for the great things He has done for us.

Christmas should also instill in us a greater depth of trust in our faithful promise-keeping Father. The prophecy Isaiah foretold hundreds of years before Christ's coming has been fulfilled. *For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given ... (Isaiah 9:6)*. Together with your Cubbies, offer thanks to God for the indescribable gift of salvation made possible with this memorable birth (2 Corinthians 9:15).

TASTE AND SEE!

Cubbies need to *taste and see that the LORD is good (Psalm 34:8)*! Pray that the Holy Spirit would work through this lesson so Cubbies:

1. Understand that Christmas is a celebration of God's promise to send the Savior.
2. Know that Jesus is the Savior and the Son of God who never sins.
3. Hear about the angel Gabriel coming to Mary and the joyful praise song Mary sang in response.
4. Thank God for sending Jesus to die for our sins and came alive again so we could have a home forever with Jesus in heaven.

5. _____

(Add a goal the Holy Spirit brings to your mind and heart as you pray for Cubbies.)



COMING IN

(10-15 minutes before club officially starts)

IDEA 1: Christmas Present

What You Need

- Little rectangular gift boxes
- “Jesus is the best gift of all!” labels (resource CD)
- Markers and stickers to decorate box
- Yellow tissue paper or raffia
- Peg clothespins
- White cloth strips

Let Cubbies decorate gift boxes and place a label underneath the lid that says “Jesus is the best gift of all!” Cubbies place pieces of tissue paper or raffia inside box, wrap a clothespin baby with white cloth strips and place the baby in the “manger” box. Encourage Cubbies to share the gift with others and tell the story of Jesus’ birth.

IDEA 2: Christmas Character Ornaments

What You Need

- Precut character ornament patterns (resource CD; print on card stock)
- Crayons
- Hole punch
- Ribbon or yarn
- *Optional* — glitter glue, paint brushes

Let Cubbies choose one or more ornament patterns to decorate. Review the Christmas story as Cubbies color the characters. Cubbies can paint glitter glue along the circular edge of the ornament. When Cubbies finish decorating, leaders use a hole punch to make a hole at the top of each Cubbie’s ornament and insert a ribbon hanger.

IDEA 3: Simple Christmas Puzzles

What You Need

- Picture puzzles printed on card stock (resource CD)
- Christmas-themed puzzles from your church or classroom

Beforehand, print and cut out the picture puzzles from the resource CD. Set the pieces on tables and add other puzzles to the tables. Let Cubbies work together to complete the puzzles. Review the Christmas story as they work.

IDEA 4: Jesus’ Birthday Party Decorations

What You Need

- Streamers
- Tape
- Paper
- Crayons
- White lunch bags
- Christmas stickers
- *Optional* — party blowers, candy canes

Let Cubbies decorate their handbook group tables with streamers to celebrate Jesus’ birthday. Then they can make birthday cards for Jesus to take home and place under their Christmas trees. At the same time, leaders can decorate goodie bags for Cubbies. To make a goodie bag, fold down the top of a lunch bag once or twice. Write a Cubbie’s name on each bag and decorate bags with Christmas stickers. Place a party blower and a candy cane in each bag. Show Cubbies how a candy cane is in the shape of a J for Jesus.

STARTING TIME (3-5 minutes)

Continue your starting routine. Include the “Cubbies Song,” Cubbies key verse and motto and the A and C verses, along with your favorite visuals, songs and motions.

PUPPET SHOW

(3-5 minutes)

What You Need

- Cubbie Bear puppet
- Katie Collie puppet
- *Optional* — pine branch or garland, red bow and tape, strand of lights, basket, one apple for each of the Cubbies

(Set all the optional props within reach but hidden from the Cubbies' view. You may want to set the strand of lights near an outlet, so you can plug them in when you mention them.)

LEADER: I wonder what Cubbie Bear is up to today? Let's call to him and see if he will come out and talk to us. Ready? One — two — three. Cubbie!

(Have Cubbie Bear enter, hopping around with more excitement than usual.)

LEADER: Cubbie, you seem even MORE excited than usual!

CUBBIE: I am! It is almost, ALMOST Christmas, and Christmas is my FAVORITE time of the year!

LEADER: Christmas is a special time, isn't it, Cubbies? *(Pause for response.)*

CUBBIE: We do many fun things at Apple Acres Farm to celebrate Christmas. Luvie Lamb likes to decorate the petting zoo with fresh pine branches and pine cones.

(Hold up the optional pine branch or garland.)

LEADER *(sniffing):* Pine trees smell so good!

(Make barking sounds and bring Katie Collie into view.)

KATIE *(barking):* Hi, everyone!

LEADER: Hi, Katie! What do you do to celebrate Christmas on the farm?

KATIE: I like to hang a pretty red bow on the front of my dog house!

(Display the optional bow now. For fun, you can say it would look nice on Katie and tape it to her head or under her chin.)

CUBBIE: Timothy's dad hangs little twinkling lights on the house, the bakery and the store. It is so pretty to see all the decorations!

(Display the optional strand of lights and plug them in for more effect.)

LEADER: I'm sure it is, Cubbie.

CUBBIE: After all the decorations are put up, Timothy helps his mom and grandma make yummy treats at the bakery. They make apple bread to take to all their neighbors and friends, and they even give them a jar of honey and apple butter too!

LEADER: That sounds delicious!

CUBBIE: It sure is. *(Pauses.)* But my most FAVORITE part of Christmas this year is giving special gifts to the people I love. Last year, I almost forgot to give my friends gifts because I was so worried about the gifts I was going to get.

KATIE: I remember that! We didn't think we were going to get *anything* from Cubbie last year!

CUBBIE: Well, this year, I picked the best apples for all my friends. I wiped them with a cloth until they were shiny. I can't wait to give them my gift.

(Display the optional basket of apples. Tell the children that Cubbie is giving each of them an apple to take home with them.)

LEADER: It is fun to give a special gift, isn't it?

CUBBIE: It sure is! I have one more apple to shine, and then I will deliver them to all of my friends on the farm. And you too, Katie Collie!

KATIE: Thanks, Cubbie. Merry Christmas, everyone!

(Let children say "Merry Christmas" as the puppets are put away.)

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SNACKS (5-10 minutes)

Snacks are optional and can be done at any time during club.

IDEA 1: Birthday Cupcakes

What You Need

- Premade undecorated cupcakes
- Containers of frosting in two or more flavors
- Colorful sprinkles
- Small plates
- Spreaders (adult use only)

Provide each Cubbie with a cupcake on a plate. Cubbies choose a flavor of frosting. The leader frosts the cupcake. Let Cubbies decorate the frosting with sprinkles. (Large clubs may want to invite parents to help frost cupcakes.) Sing "Happy Birthday" to Jesus before eating the cupcakes.

IDEA 2: Angel Food Cake

What You Need

- Angel food cake
- Fresh fruit, such as blueberries or strawberries
- *Optional* — whipped topping

Serve Cubbies small cubes of angel food cake topped with fresh fruit and whipped topping. Talk about the special message the angel brought to Mary. God was finally sending His promised Savior!

IDEA 3: Cookie Presents

What You Need

- Square sugar cookies
- Frosting
- Sprinkles
- Licorice laces

Beforehand, decorate sugar cookies to look like presents. Frost and add sprinkles. Use licorice for ribbons. As you serve cookies, remind Cubbies that Jesus is the best gift of all. He is the promised Savior. He died on the cross for our sins and came alive again so we could have a home forever with Him in heaven.

SONGS (3-5 minutes)

Songs can be done before or after Lesson Time.

SING:

- **“Go Tell It on the Mountain,” “Away in a Manger,” “Silent Night”** and other Christmas songs that are fun and easy for kids to sing. Add motions wherever possible.
- **“Do You Know What Jesus Did?”** to the tune of “The Muffin Man”

(Leader calls to Cubbies)

Oh, do you know what Jesus did?
What Jesus did, what Jesus did?

(Cubbies respond to leader)

Oh, yes I know what Jesus did!
He died on the cross for me.

(Leader calls to Cubbies)

Oh, do you know what Jesus did?
What Jesus did, what Jesus did?

(Cubbies respond to leader)

Oh, yes I know what Jesus did!
He rose from the dead for me.

(Leader calls to Cubbies)

Oh, do you know who Jesus loves?
Who Jesus loves, who Jesus loves?

(Cubbies respond to leader)

Oh, yes I know who Jesus loves!
I know that He loves me.

PRAYER (1-2 minutes)

(Use this time to intentionally model and teach Cubbies the basics of prayer.)

Cubbies, it's time to pray. When we pray, we talk to God, and we can tell Him anything we want to tell Him. Today let's praise Him for all the good things He does for us. Can you help me think of some of the things God has done? ***(Pause for replies. Help Cubbies to think of things that God does for them, such as providing food and homes, family who loves them, His Word in the Bible and salvation from sin.)*** Let's praise God for these good things. ***(Thank God for the things that Cubbies have mentioned.)***

LESSON TIME (15-20 minutes)

What You Need

- Teaching Cards (TC) 5, 10, 15, 100, 101
- Bible with bookmarks placed at Isaiah 9:6-7 and Luke 1:25-56
- *Optional* — items to wrap (a small angel, a sheet of music, a doll wrapped in a blanket, a construction paper heart, a construction paper cross), wrapping paper, small boxes, labels for boxes, a manger from a large nativity scene (or a box filled with straw or shredded paper), Bible times costumes, HoneyComb Verse Music CD

(Before club, wrap the specified optional items listed above. Wrap each item in an individual box and label the box clearly. If desired, set up a manger in your room. Your church may have a manger as part of its Christmas decorations.)

(Adapt and personalize the words of this lesson so it fits you and your Cubbies. Open with prayer.)

Cubbies, we will soon celebrate a special holiday. Do you know what that holiday is? *(Pause for response.)* That's right! It's Christmas!

Do you remember what Cubbie Bear and his friends at Apple Acres Farm like to do at Christmas? *(Decorate the zoo with pine branches and cones, place a bow on the dog house, hang lights, bake treats.)* What special things do you do at your house to celebrate Christmas? *(Cubbies' responses might include decorating the house, baking cookies, opening gifts.)* We enjoy doing fun things at Christmas, but we should never forget that Christmas is the day we celebrate a special baby who was born a long, long, LONG time ago.

(Open your Bible to Isaiah 9:6-7 and keep it visible as you teach.) In the Bible book of Isaiah, God promised that this baby would be born. He said to the Israelites, "I will give you a Son. He shall be called the Mighty God."

The Israelites believed that God would keep His promise. Cubbies, to keep a promise means that you do what you say you will do. God ALWAYS

keeps His promises! He always does what He says He will do.

The Israelites waited and looked forward to the day when God would keep His promise to send the special baby. The people waited a long, long, LONG time.

(If you are using the wrapped items, choose a Cubbie to unwrap the angel at this time. Let Cubbies know that the item is not a gift, but something that will help tell the story.)

(Display TC100 and open your Bible to Luke 1:25-56.)

Then one day, an Israelite girl named Mary had a surprise visitor. An angel from God came to talk to her! The angel, Gabriel, told Mary that she would have a special baby. Her baby would be the Savior and King of Israel forever.

Gabriel even told Mary what to name the baby. Can you guess what the baby's name would be? *(Pause for replies.)* The baby's name would be Jesus.

Surprised, Mary asked. "How will this happen?"

"Your child will be born by God's power," said Gabriel. "He will be the holy Son of God." Cubbies, the word *holy* means that Jesus wouldn't be like any other child. Jesus is perfectly good, and He never sins.

Mary believed everything that the angel told her. "I am ready to do whatever God wants," she said.

(Display TC101.) Mary was so happy. She wanted to tell someone her good news! She hurried to her relative Elizabeth's house.

Elizabeth and Mary were excited together about the good news that baby Jesus was coming. Then Mary sang a joyful song of praise to God.

(Choose a Cubbie to unwrap the sheet of music. Hold up the sheet of music and explain that it is a song that people play on an instrument and sing.)

Part of Mary's song is our Bible verse today. *(Read the verse directly from your open Bible.)* She sang: *For He who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is His name (Luke 1:49).* Let's say the verse together! *(Have Cubbies repeat the*

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verse twice. *If desired, sing it with the HoneyComb Verse Music CD.*

At the end of Mary's song, she thanked God for remembering His promise to send the special baby to be the Savior.

Optional: *If Cubbies ask about Elizabeth's pregnant belly in the picture, explain that she would have a baby named John the Baptist. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, God made baby John leap for joy inside Elizabeth. When John grew up, his job would be to help people get ready for Jesus, the Savior.*

Optional: *Choose a female leader or a female Cubbie to dress in a Bible times costume and pretend to be Mary. Direct Mary to stand in front of the class as you say the Bible verse together. Let the children interview her with a few questions. For example, they could ask her about her meeting with the angel Gabriel or her song of praise or details about Jesus' birth.*

Optional: *Ask two leaders or Cubbies to dress in Bible times costumes and pretend to be Mary and Joseph. Place a manger near them. A simple manger can be made by filling a box with shredded paper or straw.*

(Display TC15.) Soon it was time for Jesus to be born in the town of Bethlehem. Mary and her husband, Joseph, laid baby Jesus in a manger. **(NOTE: The manger could have been in a stable, a cave or the lower room of a house where a family's animals were kept at night. The Bible is not specific.)**

(Let a Cubbie unwrap the doll. Pass the doll around for all the Cubbies to hold. Then, if you are having helpers act out the story, hand the doll to Mary.)

(Let a Cubbie unwrap the heart.) Cubbies, God loves us very much. In fact, on the day that Jesus was born, God gave us the BEST gift that ANYONE could ever get, because when Jesus grew up from a tiny baby into a man, He did something special for you and me.

(Let a Cubbie unwrap the cross. Then display TC5.) Jesus died on the cross to save us from our sins.

Then He came alive again! One day those who trust Jesus as Savior will go to heaven and live there with Jesus forever. **(Display TC10.)** Let's thank God for keeping His promise to send Jesus to be our Savior. **(Pray with Cubbies to close the lesson.)**

HANDBOOK TIME

(15-30 minutes)

Give each handbook group leader a copy of Special Day 2 Handbook Leader Sheet from the resource CD.

Special Day 2 Activity Sheet

What You Need

- A copy of Special Day 2 Activity Sheet for each Cubbie
- Crayons
- *Optional* — jumbo craft sticks, glue sticks, pairs of child-sized scissors

Ask Cubbies why we celebrate Christmas. Reinforce that Christmas is a celebration of God's promise to send the Savior. Ask Cubbies to identify the various figures on the sheet. Use the figures to lead into the events of the Christmas story. Tell Cubbies that Mary sang the words of Luke 1:49 after she heard the angel's good news about her baby. Recite Luke 1:49 together. If desired, Cubbies can cut out the boxes on the sheet and glue them to craft sticks to make puppets.

IDEA 2: Play-Doh Christmas

What You Need

- Play-Doh
- *Optional* — small paper plates, drinking straws cut to resemble birthday candles

Suggest that Cubbies each shape a different character from the story of Jesus' birth. Place characters together to form a nativity scene. Cubbies can also make a Play-Doh birthday cake for Jesus and decorate it as desired.

PLAY TIME (15-20 minutes)

IDEA 1: Bow Relay

What You Need

- A bow for each Cubbie (Do not remove paper from adhesive.)
- A gift box without a lid for each group
- *Optional* — garland for starting lines

Divide Cubbies into groups. Have each group stand in a line behind a starting line. Give each Cubbie a bow. The first person in each group will place the bow on her head and attempt to walk to her group's gift box, not too far away, and drop the bow in the box before running back to her line. The next Cubbie in the group will then take a turn. Remind Cubbies that even though we might get some great presents for Christmas, Jesus is the best present of all.

IDEA 2: Fly, Angels, Fly!

What You Need

- Large pictures of Mary, Joseph, shepherds and heaven (resource CD)
- Masking tape

Post pictures on the wall at Cubbies' height. (If playing on an Awana Game Square, you could put Mary on the blue line, Joseph on the red line, shepherds on green line and heaven on the yellow line.) Talk about how angels are messengers who go where God sends them. Ask: "Where did the angel go in our story today? What message did he have for Mary?" In this game, Cubbies will be angels and will go where the game leader sends them. Give commands such as these: Run to Mary. Walk backwards to Joseph. Soar up to heaven. Fly slowly to the shepherds. Leap back to heaven. Tiptoe to Mary. Take giant steps to heaven.

IDEA 3: Nativity Scavenger Hunt

What You Need

- Unbreakable nativity set
- Paper clues

Ahead of time, the game leader could write clues and hide pieces from the nativity set. One at a time read the clues and send Cubbies searching. Once they find the pieces, let them place them in the nativity set.

Sample clues:

- I made a surprise visit to Mary and told her she would have a special baby. Who am I? You can find me near the large cabinet.
- I was ready to do what God planned. He chose me to be the mother of Jesus. Who am I? You can find me under a table in the room.
- Mary and I had to travel to Bethlehem. That's where Jesus was born. We laid Him in a manger. Who am I? You can find me behind a curtain.

GOING HOME (5-10 minutes)

Here's a fun review idea! Give a bell or other percussion instrument to each Cubbie. Explain that they get to use them as you review the Bible story together. You or another leader will make a statement. If it is true, Cubbies will ring their bells, but if it was not part of the Bible story, the bells must stay silent. Sample statements:

- God sent an angel to tell Mary that she would have a special baby.
- The angel's name was Humpty Dumpty.
- Mary did not want to be Jesus' mother.
- Mary was so happy she went to tell her cousin, Elizabeth, the good news.
- Mary thanked God for remembering His promise to send a Savior.
- Jesus was born in (your town).
- Mary and Joseph laid Him in a manger.
- God always keeps His promises.
- God loves us very much.
- Some people have never sinned.
- All have sinned. Jesus died on the cross to save us from our sins.

Let's all ring our bells to thank Jesus and to celebrate the best present of all.

For He who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is His name. (Luke 1:49)

NAME: _____

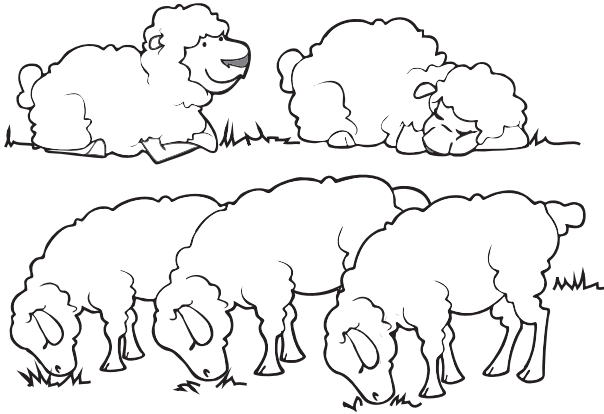


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Basic Instructions: Count the people or animals in each box and circle the correct number. Color the page.

Even More Fun: Cut out each box. Trim off numbers and glue each box onto a craft stick to make puppets.

Ultimate Fun: Act out the Christmas story with your puppets. Act out Gabriel coming to talk to Mary, and then Mary can start to sing and say Luke 1:49. Act out Mary and Joseph going to Bethlehem. Act out Gabriel talking to the shepherds while they are watching sheep and the shepherds running to see baby Jesus.