

# Jesus is born

## Faith focus


We welcome baby Jesus.

## Introduction

Many twos know about babies. Even if they don't know a real baby, they realize they are no longer babies themselves! Twos may feel a special connection to baby Jesus. Build on this as you tell about Jesus' birth. Although the story is familiar to many of us, it is new to them. Let your voice and actions show wonder and excitement. Enjoy the wonder and excitement the children share with you.

This module includes prayers of thanksgiving, response, praise, and adoration. Twos will express these physically by holding a blanket together, acting out holding a baby, and by standing and kneeling.

## Theme song

"Jesus, baby Jesus"  track 4

## Preparation

**Attach Bible story figures** (see list in *Tell-It-Again* on p. 82) to small blocks or other containers to stand upright. *OR*, you may choose to attach Velcro™ or magnetic tape to the backs of the figures and tell the story with a metal sheet or flannelboard.

**Share the Bible story in module 4:** You will need a baby blanket as the base for telling the story. Lay this on the floor in front of you. You will set the story figures on top of the blanket. (*If using a metal sheet or flannelboard with the figures, set this on top of the blanket.*)

**Learn the American Sign Language (ASL) sign for "Jesus."** Use it when saying the name "Jesus" during songs, chants, or finger plays.



1. Hold hands in front of chest. Touch tip of middle finger of one hand to center of other palm.
2. Repeat, reversing hands.

It is not necessary to explain that the sign means "Jesus." Children will learn this by association. The sign will be difficult for twos to imitate, but they will be able to touch their four fingers to the opposite palm.

## GENERAL SUPPLIES

- Wee Wonder CD
- CD player
- Bible
- Snack
- Story figures
- Baby blanket for storytelling
- Prepared activity cards
- Responsive play materials (see p. 82)

## Prepare the activity cards:



Session 1



Session 2



Session 3



Session 4

## Gather materials for Responsive play

### CONNECT

Connect with the story through play.

**All sessions:** baby blankets, baby dolls, baby toys

**Session 2:** add wooden crate, baby bed, or plain box

**Session 3:** add towels or pieces of fabric for Bible clothes

**Session 4:** add small fancy boxes or bottles, paper/cardboard stars

### BUILD

Build interpretations of the story with blocks and nativity figures.

**All sessions:** blocks, plastic/wooden nativity figures suitable for play. Use the following for specific sessions:

**Session 1:** Mary, Joseph, angel

**Session 2:** add baby Jesus, manger, animals

**Session 3:** add shepherds, sheep

**Session 4:** add Magi and paper/cardboard stars

### TELL-IT-AGAIN

Set out the day's story items for children to retell the story in their own way.

**Session 1:** Mary, Joseph, angel, baby blanket

**Session 2:** add baby Jesus, manger, cow

**Session 3:** add shepherds, sheep

**Session 4:** add star, Magi

### EXPLORE

Explore items from the story of Jesus' birth.

**All sessions:** different types of fabric pieces, pinecones, small evergreen branches

**Session 2:** add straw or raffia, sand shovels, buckets, plastic farm animals, vinyl tablecloth

**Session 3:** add lamb skin (real or faux), photos of sheep, toy sheep (small plastic/stuffed)

**Session 4:** add small boxes/containers with lids, jingle bells and other items to put in boxes

### CREATE

Experience aspects of the story through art materials.

**Session 1:** small pieces of fabric for collage

**Session 2:** play dough; rolling pins; farm animal cookie cutters

**Session 3:** cinnamon ornament dough (see p. 255), rolling pins, cookie cutters (angels, stars, farm animals), wax paper, straw, permanent marker

**Session 4:** star stickers, dark paper

### READ

Read about Jesus' birth.

*The Story of Christmas* by Patricia Pingry

*Touch-and-See Bible* illustrated by Eileen Hine

*Welcome, Baby Jesus* by Donna Scorer


**FAITH  
FOCUS**

We welcome  
baby Jesus.

# Waiting for baby Jesus

## Matthew 1:20-21; Luke 1:26-31

### Faith formation for twos

Instead of planning activities for children to *learn about* God, think about creating an environment where children can *encounter* God. Twos do not need to be drilled with facts. Sit with them and share the joys of discovery.

This session introduces Jesus' earthly family, Mary and Joseph. Although the prayer and opening song specifically thank God for mommies and daddies, be sensitive to the family structures of the children in your group. Not all children have a mommy and a daddy. Change the words of the song and prayer to focus more on "families" if this better fits the needs and experiences of your group.

### Preparation

- Place a bookmark in your Bible at Luke 1.
- Practice the American Sign Language (ASL) sign for "Jesus" (*see module introduction, p. 81*).
- Practice telling the Bible story using story figures and baby blanket.
- Prepare a healthy snack.
- For the "Blanket play" Gather option, collect supplies listed. *Note: These materials will also be used in the Explore area of Responsive play.*
- Prepare the activity card: cut a rectangle of felt (1¼ x 1¾ inches / 3 x 4.5 cm) for each child.
- Gather materials for Responsive play.

### Environment for twos

It is not necessary to change all of the Responsive play boxes with each new module. Feel free to keep some favorite boxes. You may want to change a certain box to keep things fresh, if children seem to be losing interest.

Follow the children's lead. If they maintain interest in a certain Responsive play box, honor that by keeping the box available. Change boxes to build on the children's interests and encourage their joy of discovery.

#### AT A GLANCE

##### Gather

- Welcome
- Snack or "Blanket play" activity
- Song ("Oh, it's time to gather...")

##### Share the Bible story

- Welcoming words with blanket
- Chant ("A baby! A baby!")
- Song ("Babies, babies, babies")
- Song with the Bible ("Jesus loves me")
- Story (Matthew 1:20-21; Luke 1:26-31)
- Prayer with blanket
- Song ("Jesus is special")
- Activity card: "Mary and Joseph"

##### Responsive play

##### Sending

#### SUPPLIES

- Wee Wonder CD
- CD player
- Bible
- Snack
- For "Blanket play" Gather option: baby blankets, baby dolls
- Story figures: angel, Mary, Joseph
- For telling story: baby blanket, flannelboard or baking sheet (*optional*)
- For activity card: felt cloth, glue
- Responsive play materials (*see p. 86*)

# Gather

1. As children enter the room, welcome each one by name.
2. Choose one of these options for children to do as they enter the room:  
**Option 1:** *Snack.* If you do not offer snack right now, plan to serve it just *before* Responsive play.  
**Option 2:** *Activity, "Blanket play"*—Set out several baby blankets and dolls. Show children how to wrap the dolls as they arrive. Or they may wrap themselves in a blanket. Play a game of "Peek-a-boo" until you are ready to start the Bible story.
3. When you are ready to share the Bible story, sing the following words to the tune of "She'll be comin' 'round the mountain" as children put aside the blankets and dolls.

(2 x) Oh, it's time to gather in our circle here.

Oh, it's time to gather 'round,  
Share a smile and sit right down,  
Oh, it's time to gather in our circle here.

## Share the Bible story

1. Opening ritual. Spread a baby blanket over the storytelling area. Say,

A baby! A baby!  
We're waiting for a baby!  
A baby! A baby!  
Jesus is the baby!

Sing the following words to the tune of "Hands, hands, hands" from the *Wee Wonder* CD.

Babies, babies, babies,  
Thank you, God, for babies.

Mommies, mommies, mommies,  
Thank you, God, for mommies.

Daddies, daddies, daddies,  
Thank you God for daddies.

(Or "Thank you God for families.")

2. Sing "Jesus loves me" along with the *Wee Wonder* CD. As you sing, make the ASL sign for "Jesus." (See words to the song, p. 271.)

Jesus loves me, this I know  
for the Bible tells me so . . .

Hold up the Bible, with today's story marked. Say,

"This is the Bible."

Open the Bible to the story and point to the words.

"Here is the story."

Carefully set the open Bible to the side.

3. Share the Bible story.

**Story figures:** Mary, Joseph, angel

**Other props:** baby blanket

**Set the scene:** Place story figures on top of blanket, or place a magnetic/flannel board on top of blanket.

**Tell the story.**



track 3



track 1



Figures 4, 10, and 27

*(Place Mary on one side of storytelling area.)*

God sent an angel to visit Mary. *(Place angel beside Mary.)*

The angel said, "You are going to have a special baby. You will name this boy Jesus."

*(Remove angel. Place Joseph on other side of storytelling area.)*

God sent an angel to visit Joseph. *(Place angel beside Joseph.)*

The angel said, "Mary is going to have a special baby. You will name this boy Jesus."

*(Remove angel. Move Mary and Joseph side by side.)*

Together, Mary and Joseph waited for God's special baby.

- 4.** Carefully place the story figures in the Tell-It-Again box. Then lead children in a prayer with the baby blanket. Pick up the blanket and invite each child to hold onto the edge. Pray:

**"God, thank you for mommies and daddies (or families) who take care of us. Amen."**

- 5.** Sing together. Place the baby blanket on the floor in the middle of the group. Walk around the blanket together and sing the following words to "I am special," from the *Wee Wonder* CD.



track 2

**Jesus is special;  
He's very, very special.  
He's God's special baby.**

- 6.** Activity card: "Mary and Joseph." Look at the picture and say, "Mary and Joseph are waiting for God's special baby. Let's give them a baby blanket while they wait." Give each child an activity card and help them to glue a rectangle of felt on Mary's arms as a blanket waiting for baby Jesus.



*Offer snack now, if you did not at the beginning of the session.*

### **Responsive play** *(See p. 86.)*

Using the suggestions, set up areas for "free play" around the room. After Share the Bible story provide ample time for children to play alone or with others in the areas they choose.

### **Sending**

As children leave, kneel down to their level. Hold out your hands for each child to grasp, give you a hug, or keep a distance, as they wish. Say each one's name and tell how glad you were to see them today. Hold the baby blanket and say:

**"We will wait for baby Jesus."**

*Option: Sing "Holding hands together" from the Wee Wonder CD, while holding hands.*



track 13

# Responsive play

## CONNECT

Set out items used in baby care and invite children to play with them.

**Faith Link:** "There is much to do to get ready to take care of a baby."

**Supplies:** baby blankets, baby dolls, baby toys

**Tip:** Talk about what you see the children doing, to encourage language development.

## BUILD

Set out blocks, along with nativity figures.

**Faith Link:** "What will Mary and Joseph need for a baby?"

**Supplies:** blocks, several sets of Mary and Joseph figures from nativity sets appropriate for play (plastic sets or wooden figures)

**Tip:** Extend children's play by asking, "What else could we build for the baby?"

## TELL-IT-AGAIN

Set out the day's story items for children to retell the story in their own way.

**Story figures needed:** angel, Mary, Joseph

**Additional props:** baby blanket

## EXPLORE

Drape various pieces of fabric around/under nature items to encourage children to explore and create their own arrangements.

**Faith Link:** "We can bring nature inside and make beautiful arrangements."

**Supplies:** variety of fabric pieces with different textures, pinecones, small branches of evergreen

**Tip:** Many adults prepare for Christ's advent by decorating with cloth, evergreen, and pinecones. Children may recognize these items and enjoy making their own arrangements.

## CREATE

Set out small pieces of fabric to glue on paper and make a collage.

**Faith Link:** "Many people use cloth to make blankets for babies."

**Supplies:** small pieces of fabric, glue, paper

**Tip:** Squeeze out white glue onto a plastic lid. Encourage children to dip their fingers (*or cotton swabs*) into the glue and then spread the glue on the fabric.

**Alternative:** Set out play dough with favorite tools.

## READ

Read about Jesus' birth.

*The Story of Christmas* by Patricia Pingry

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