

MERRY CHRISTMAS



LET'S HAVE A PARTY!

Parents, you may find yourselves during this Christmas season in quite an unexpected place. So did every single character in the original Christmas story. A young woman couldn't find a place to give birth to her child-king except in a barn. The first-invited guests were shepherds...the lowest of their society. An enraged ruler sought out to take the life of this newborn baby. Imagine how those within this story felt as God birthed his plan of redemption through such unconventional means. Knowing how the Christmas story runs into the Easter story makes all the difference. As we find ourselves in this year's unconventional Christmas story, we hope your family can take a minute to lean into each other, celebrate the wonder of Jesus's birthday and find peace that God's unconventional ways bring miraculous results.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

A box of cake mix (included), oil, eggs, water, frosting, candle, Bible (or read the verses on the back of this sheet)

WHAT TO DO

- Bake the cake & frost it
- Place the birthday candle in cake and sing "Happy Birthday" to Jesus
- Use the talking points in "For Preschool" or "For Elementary" to guide your family while you bake the cake or while you are eating the cake (or both)

WHAT TO SAY (for preschool)

- Say: We are going to read a story where some people get a BIG surprise. Can you show me a surprise face (wait for your child to show a surprise face and show them yours back). Let's read and see what their surprise was.
- Read Luke 2:8-20 —*Tip: For younger kids, use a Preschool Story Bible if you have one.*
- Say: The shepherds must have been so excited to be the very first ones invited to visit God's son Jesus the night he was born. This was the first Christmas. We celebrate Jesus' birthday at Christmas. Let's sing "Happy Birthday" to Jesus.
Tip: if you have multiple preschoolers, light the candle more than once so that each child has an opportunity to blow out the candle...they won't mind singing "Happy Birthday" more than once.

WHAT TO SAY (for elementary)

- Ask: What's the best surprise you have ever received (or what would be the best surprise every for you)?
What kind of surprise would you not like to receive (i.e. like a spider on the wall or no cookies left in the cookie jar)?
- Say: There was a surprise party for Jesus the very first Christmas. Let's read about it in Luke 2:8-20.
- Read Luke 2:8-20
- Ask: Was the surprise for the shepherds a good surprise or a bad surprise? Why do you think they were scared at first? (hint: angels appeared out of nowhere talking to them and filling the sky singing) How do you think you would feel if you were one of the shepherds?
- Say: After the shepherds saw Jesus, they weren't afraid anymore. They were filled with joy because they visited God's son Jesus (even though he was just laying there...but they saw that God had kept his promise and were in the presence of their Savior). How does knowing Jesus bring joy?
- Say: We can have joy tonight as we celebrate Jesus' birthday (light the candle and sing "Happy Birthday" to Jesus!)
- Extra: Find "Superbook: The Very First Christmas" on Youtube (Superbook Channel, Season 1, Episode 8)