

GLENVIEW NEW CHURCH SUNDAY MORNING PROGRAM
Primary Lessons: Phase 1 – Lesson 3
The Birth of the Lord (Luke 1:26-28,31; 2:4-16,20)

I. Underlying Ideas for the Teacher

- A. The Lord was born at night when it was dark, representing the ignorance at the time.
- B. If the Lord had not come into the world, mankind would have destroyed itself.

II. Story Circle

A. Introduction

1. Do you remember what a prophet is? (A person who speaks for the Lord) And what is a prophecy? (A message from the Lord)
2. Last time we heard this prophecy from the prophet, Malachi: "Behold, I send My messenger, and he will prepare the way before Me." (Malachi 3:1) Who was the messenger that prepared the way for the Lord - who got people ready to hear the things that the Lord would teach them? (John the Baptist)
3. If John the Baptist had not come before the Lord, people would not have been ready to believe that Jesus was the promised Messiah, and they would not have been ready to listen to and learn the things the Lord would teach them.
4. All through the Old Testament there are prophecies that one day God Himself would come into the world. We've talked before about two of these prophecies. I'll read them to you now:
 - a. "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light." (Isaiah 9:2) You did a project about this prophecy. Do you remember it? (Show children one of the finished projects from Lesson #1.)
 - b. "For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given." (Is. 9:6) Who is the Child who is going to be born? (The Lord—Jesus)
5. Do you remember how Zacharias found out that he and Elizabeth were going to have a baby whom they would name John? (The angel Gabriel came to Zacharias and told him.)
6. In our story today, the angel Gabriel brings the same kind of news to someone else.

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B. Tell/Read the Story

1. Read aloud Luke 1:26-28,31; 2:4-16,20.
2. You may need to explain the following as you're reading:
 - a. Swaddling cloths (not "clothes"): strips of cloth wrapped around an infant (See attached project description for more details.)
 - b. Inn: like a motel– a place you can stay and sleep when you're away from home
 - c. Manger: wooden box for holding food for animals such as cows, donkeys, sheep
 - d. Multitude of the heavenly host: a huge crowd of angels

C. Ideas to Discuss

1. Who came to Mary and told her that she was going to have a baby? (The angel Gabriel)
2. What was she supposed to name the baby? (Jesus)
3. Who came with Mary to Bethlehem to be registered? (Joseph)
4. Why did Mary have to lay her baby in a manger? (Because there was no room for them in the inn)
5. Who else heard the news that the Lord was born? (The shepherds)
6. Who told them? (An angel of the Lord)
7. After the angels went away, what did the shepherds decide to do? (To go to Bethlehem and see Jesus)
8. While the shepherds returned to their fields, what did they do along the way? (Glorified and praised God for everything they had heard and seen)

D. Further Ideas

1. The Lord had to come into the world to teach people how to be good so they could go to heaven.
2. Only a few people were ready to hear that the Lord was born. The shepherds were ready because they were kind and good, so they welcomed the angel's news.
3. When we are selfish, we have no room in our hearts for the Lord, just as there was no room for Him at the inn.
4. On the first Christmas day, the Lord gave us the greatest gift of all. Can you guess what it was? (Himself!)

III. Enrichment Activities

A. Music

1. "Away in a manger," *Hymnal* #206.
2. "Children, can you truly tell," *Hymnal* #201.
3. "O come, little children," *Hymnal* #203.

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B. Activities: FLANNEL BOARD

1. Give felt pieces (lambs, shepherds, Mary, Joseph, donkey, manger, baby Jesus, stable animals) to children and have them add their pieces to the flannel board at "the appropriate time as you tell/read the story.

C. Project

1. Stained Glass Window
 - a. **Oiled.** After children color the attached picture with water-base felt markers, the teacher can rub it with vegetable oil. (Good to lay the picture on a stack of newspaper while oiling.) Try not to oil any closer to the edges than necessary. The oiled picture is then mounted on a poster board or construction paper frame.
 - b. **Framed.** To make the frame: Begin with a 9 X 12 piece (red, blue, or purple). On the back, draw lines 1" from all 4 sides. Cut out this center rectangle using a utility knife or single edge razor blade. (Save it for some other project.) Lay the oiled picture face down against the back of the frame, and tape the edges of the picture to the back of the frame.
 - b. **Mounted.** After children color the attached picture, use rubber cement to mount it on a 9X12 piece on construction paper (red, blue, or purple).
2. Christmas Mobile– Please note that this project requires teacher preparation, tracing and cutting some pieces for the younger children. But the finished project is well worth keeping. (See attached instructions and patterns for templates.)
3. Baby in Swaddling Cloths– See project description in the *General Convention Sunday School Activity Book* (red volume) for lesson 125.

IV. Teaching Aids

- A. Flannel board with felt figures to illustrate story and/or nativity scene.
- B. Pictures of annunciation, nativity, shepherds receiving news from angel(s).

V. Further Reading for the Teacher

- A. Dole's *Bible Study Notes*, Vol. 5, "The Birth of the Lord" (Luke 2:1-20).
- B. "Christmas Prophecies," a talk by the Rev. Alfred Acton (see attached).

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CHRISTMAS MOBILE

Note: This project takes a long time. The cutting and tracing are not easy for little children, so the teacher must be prepared to do lots outside of class time. But the finished project is worth keeping for years!

Materials Needed

Coat hanger/dowel
Glue
String
Hole puncher
Scissors

Construction paper: white, red, brown, yellow
Poster board: white, red, green, yellow, black, blue
Gold foil paper

Before Class

1. Mount attached patterns on cardboard with rubber cement. Cut out with utility knife and use as templates.
2. Trace (and cut– optional) for each child:

From Poster Board

Circles: 1 yellow
1 green
1 white
1 black
1 blue

Oval: 1 red

From Construction Paper

2 hearts (red)
2 mangers (brown)
2 Jesus (white)
2 angels (white) – Hardest to cut
2 lambs (white) – Next hardest to cut
2 stars (yellow)

From Gold Foil

2 crowns and 2 halos

3. Using hole puncher, make a hole in each circle and in the oval about 1/8" from the "top" edge so children will know which way is "up."

In Class

Have children glue the construction paper & gold foil silhouettes onto the poster board backgrounds as follows:

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Circle/Oval

Green
White
Blue
Black
Yellow
Red

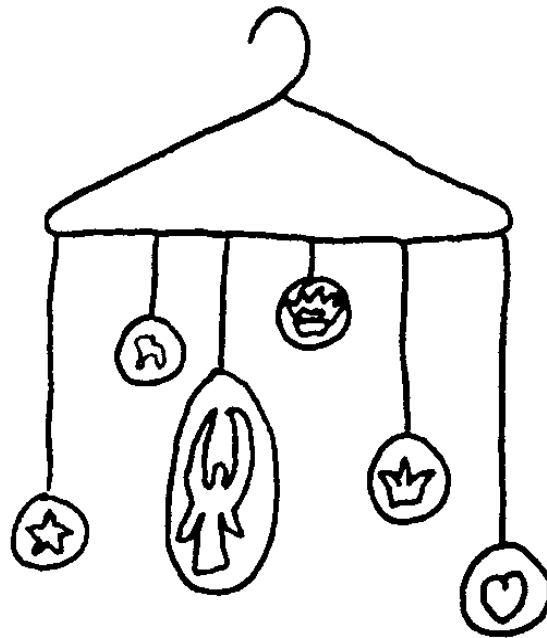
Silhouette

Lambs
Hearts
Crowns
Stars
Mangers,
babies, halos
Angels



After Class

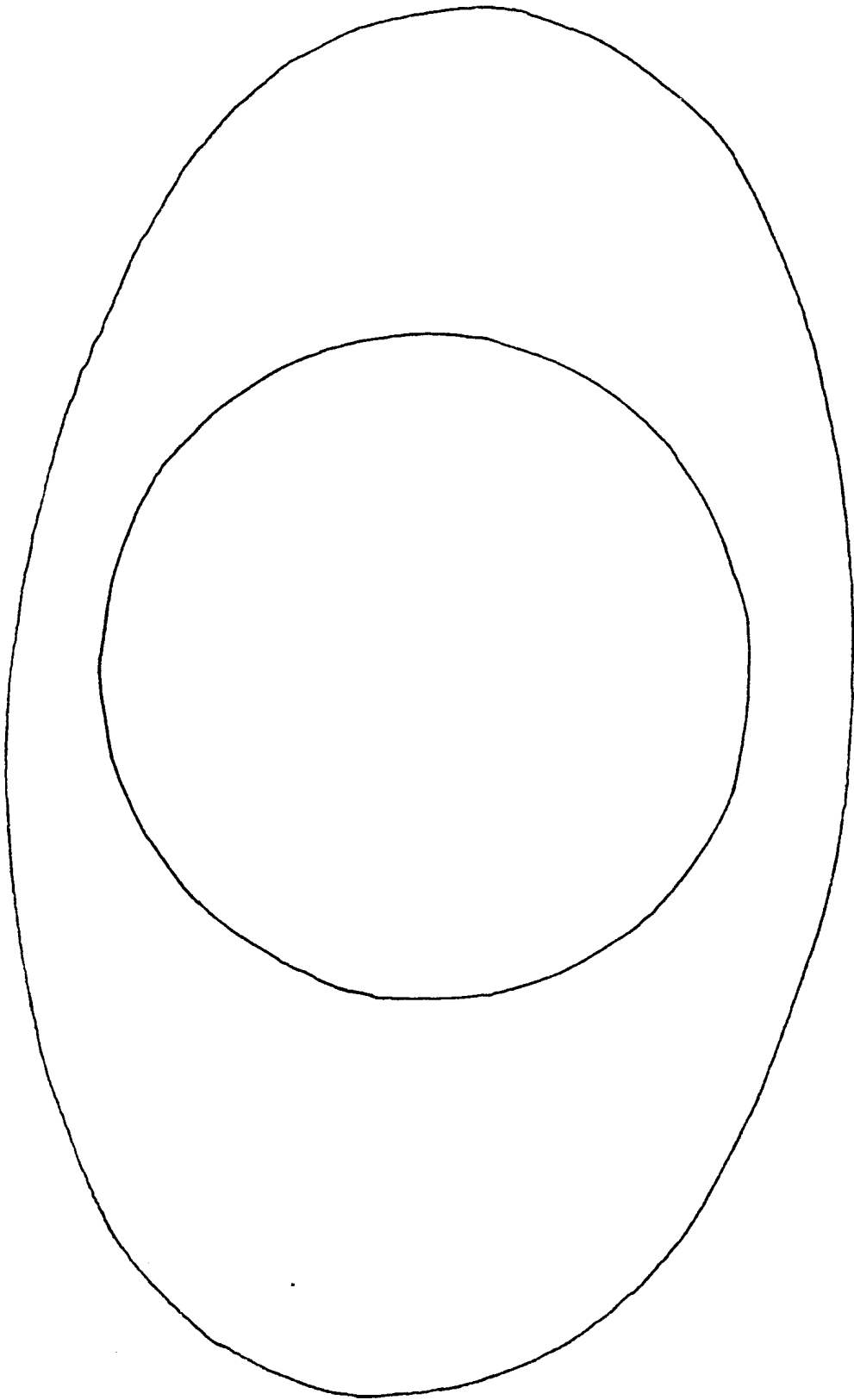
Teacher puts mobiles together. The following arrangement of the pieces gives a nice sense of balance as far as size of backgrounds and dark and light colors:



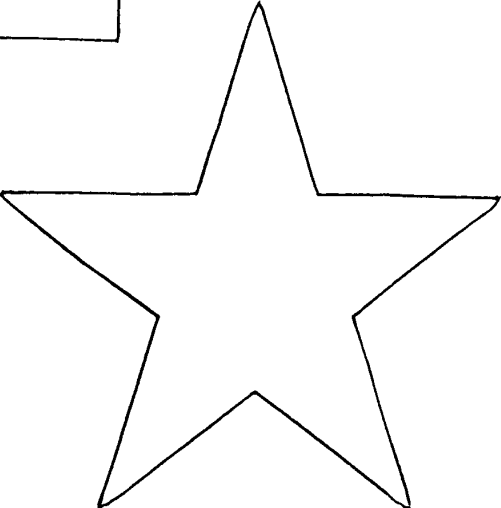
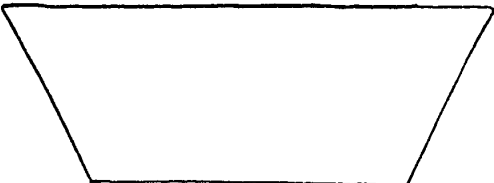
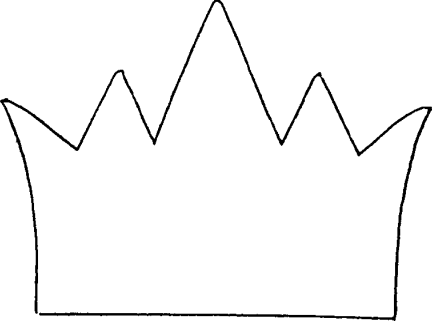
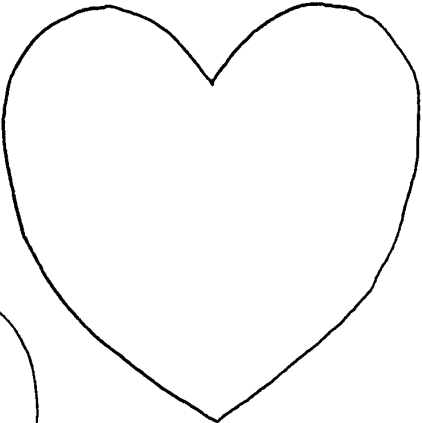
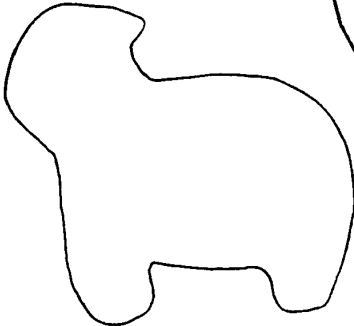
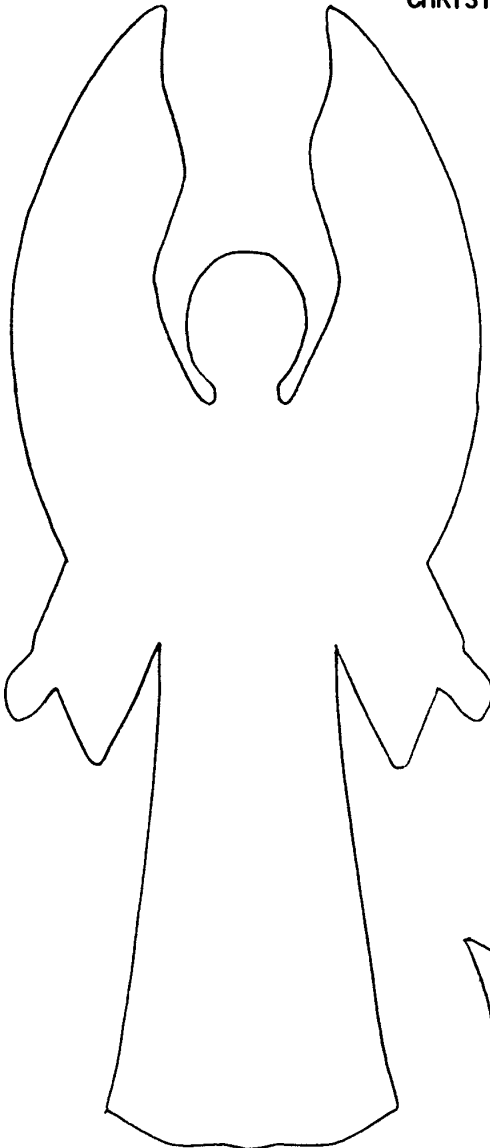
Lengths of strings from hanger to top of circle (but cut them longer to begin with)

Star	8"
Lamb	3 ½"
Angel	5 ¼"
Jesus	1 ½"
Crown	6"
Heart	10"

Be sure to put a nametag on each hanger to identify the owner.



CHRISTMAS MOBILE TEMPLATES



CHRISTMAS PROPHECIES

Rt. Rev. Alfred Acton

“Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given. And the Government shall be upon His shoulders, and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, Father of Eternity, Prince of Peace.”

Looking ahead to Christmas is always exciting. It is fun to think about Christmas time, to think about the wonderful things that can happen on Christmas day. Of course, when you think of Christmas you may be thinking about the presents you’re hoping to get, or about some special holiday time that you’re going to share with your friends. Perhaps you’re looking forward with excitement to decorating your home, and to setting up the Christmas tree with all the pretty lights and balls. There are many, many things that you can look forward to with excitement about Christmas. Each year, as you are reminded about it, you can expect that excitement to quicken once again. “Only 20 more days to Christmas,” “Only 10 more days,” and so forth, always cause excitement as you look ahead to the happy time ahead.

Imagine a world without Christmas. Imagine a world where no one knew what really happened on Christmas day, where no one celebrated the birth of the Lord as a little baby in Bethlehem. If you can imagine such a world, you know how people before the Lord came into the world must have felt. You look ahead to Christmas with excitement. Imagine how people much have looked ahead to the very first Christmas. For thousands of years people had been wondering when Christmas would happen. They knew that it would happen, but when? Why do you know that people, before the Lord's birth into the world, knew that He was going to be born? The answer is found in many places in the Old Testament. Again and again, in the Old Testament, people were told by the Lord that He would come. The Word contains many of these statements. They are called Christmas Prophecies, because they predict the Lord's coming. Many of them remind you of Christmas: “Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, Father of Eternity, Prince of Peace.” “Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bring forth a Son whose name shall be called Immanuel.” “Thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judah art not the least among the princes of Judah, for out of thee shall come a governor who shall rule My people Israel.” “I shall see Him, but not now, I shall behold Him, but not nigh.” “The scepter shall not depart out of Judah till Shiloh come.”

Those are just a few of the predictions about the Lord's coming that we find in the Old Testament. In all, there are seventy-six different Christmas prophecies. Each of them reminded people of the coming of the Lord and so helped them to

capture the excitement of what would happen. Just as you look ahead with excitement to Christmas, so people, when they heard the prophecies, looked ahead with excitement to the Lord's coming. They could understand that the Lord would be born on earth. This was a very important thing for people at that time, because it helped them understand who the Lord was. It helped them understand that the Lord was a perfect Man, someone who could love them; someone who had made them in His image; and so someone whom they could love as well.

You know that these predictions about the Lord's coming on earth did come true. The very first Christmas did happen. After that people wanted to tell other people about the Lord's birth into the world. So after His birth, when Christians wanted to tell people who the Lord was, that He really had kept His promises and come into the world, they used these same predictions about His coming to help show people that He had come. Think of it. If someone had told you about something that was going to happen, and he was right in every detail, you would believe that he had special knowledge. The Lord, of course, has special knowledge. So the Lord not only can have one person tell about His coming, but the Lord can have hundreds of people, over thousands of years, again and again, tell people about His coming. This very fact helps us to understand that it really was the Lord who was born in the world on Christmas day. For this reason all the predictions about Christmas are important to us as well as to people who were waiting for His coming.

Let us, then, as we hear the wonderful prophecies of the Lord's coming, the beautiful predictions of His birth into the world, remember that the Lord Himself was born on earth as a little baby in a manger, in Bethlehem of Judea, a little Child who grew up to rule over all the heavens as King of kings and Lord of lords. What an exciting time Christmas is. What a wonderful time, full of surprises, full of awe. Certainly, when we think of Christmas we can rejoice, we can be filled with the glad tidings that the angels proclaimed to the shepherds when they said: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."