

What
child
is
this???

TEACHER/STUDENT SCORE

What Child Is This?

Questions! We are an inquisitive people. As children we begin annoying those around us with a steady stream of questions. Our school years are based on questions which we must learn to answer correctly. As adults our days are filled with questions and the need for accurate answers. Even our Bible is filled with questions, and we know that Jesus was a master at asking them. Our worship service is built around questions. From the title song through each of the five sections we ask questions about Jesus' birth. Even our selected carols and hymns include questions.

Sadly, in our daily lives many questions go unanswered. But that is not the case here. Our series of questions all find their answers in the Babe wrapped in swaddling clothed lying in a manger. The Bible provides us with the answer to every important question asked about our lives on earth, and our future in heaven.

This worship service is written for children from preschool through eighth grade, any size group. Feel free to make adjustments necessary to fit your purpose and schedule.

IMPORTANT NOTICE ABOUT THE MUSIC

For many years Kremer Christmas services have included new songs and theme songs. This year's program includes NO music disk. **HOWEVER, we do offer great alternatives.**

1. **60 KREMER SONGS TO PICK FROM** Kremer Resources is making available 60 Christmas songs (mostly original) from past children's Christmas services. Visit the Kremer website at www.kremerresources.com and click through to CHRISTMAS & WORSHIP SERVICES > 23 CHRISTMAS SERVICES > OTHER CHRISTMAS PRODUCTS > SHEET MUSIC AND MP3 dropdown. Each song comes with reproducible sheet music, singer and accompaniment MP3. Cost is \$9.99 per song.

THE SONGS

Sheet music for some of the songs is provided on this disk. Other suggestions are also given from our collection of songs for purchase.

THE SECTIONS

Each of the five program sections begins with two questions. First, an overall theme question, and second, a related question from Scripture.

THE NARRATION

There are parts included for two narrators. Feel free to use any number of children for these parts.

RECITATIONS

Recitation sections always include Bible verses that reinforce the narrator's point.

BANNER

Art work and instructions have been provided to make a full size church banner.

WORSHIP BULLETIN

A worship bulletin for this service is available at Kremer Resources while supplies last.

This program uses of the NIV 1984 edition.

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WHAT CHILD IS THIS?

Pastor or Narrators (Prior to Processional): (N1) Questions! How much of your day is filled with questions? Can you imagine how many questions you asked and answered today? Questions like, is it supposed to be sunny today? What's for supper? Did you make your bed? Or, where are my keys? Questions can be worthwhile, because they help us learn. As little children we questioned everything. And the more we questioned, the more we learned.

(N2) Today we will look at some questions about Christmas. The title of this service is based on a familiar question from an old Christmas carol, "What Child Is This?" That carol was first published in the 1800s by an insurance agent named William Chatterton Dix. William was a faithful Christian and he loved writing poems about Jesus. Dix took his poem titled "What Child Is This?" and joined it with the enchanting English melody called "Greensleeves". William Dix took little time in answering his title question because he quickly answers with the words: "this, this, is Christ the King." What a beautiful answer to such an important question.

(N3) Throughout this service, we will encounter many questions asked and answered. As we ask the how, when, where, why, and what of Christmas, we will discover the story of God's love for us that was freely given to the world in the Bethlehem manger. And throughout our worship, many questions will be asked in our recitations and even in our hymns and songs. But the answers will all reflect the same comforting Christmas truth: "This, this is Christ the King, the Babe, the Son of Mary!"

Processional: "O Lord, How Shall I Meet Thee?"

1. O Lord, how shall I meet Thee,
How welcome Thee aright?
Thy people long to greet Thee,
My Hope, my heart's Delight!
O kindle, Lord, most holy,
Thy lamp within my breast
To do in spirit lowly
All that may please Thee best.
2. Love caused Thy incarnation,
Love brought Thee down to me;
Thy thirst for my salvation
Procured my liberty.
O love beyond all telling,
That led Thee to embrace,
In love all love excelling,
Our lost and fallen race!

3. Rejoice, then, ye sad-hearted,
Who sit in deepest gloom,
Who mourn o'er joys departed
And tremble at your doom.
Despair not, He is near you,
Yea, standing at the door,
Who best can help and cheer you
And bids you weep no more.

4. He comes to judge the nations,
A terror to His foes,
A Light of consolations
And blessed Hope to those
Who love the Lord's appearing.
O glorious Sun, now come,
Send forth Thy beams so cheering,
And guide us safely home.

Invocation: In the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Responsive reading:

P: Little children do you know who it was so long ago

C: In a lowly stall was born on the first glad Christmas morn?

Children: Yes, we know that God above
In the wonder of his love
As a holy Babe was born
To the world on Christmas morn.

P: Do you know who told the earth all about his sacred birth?

C: Filled the earth with lovely song voiced his praises loud and long?

Children: Yes, we know that angels bright
Broke the stillness of the night
Praising him who came below
Thus his wondrous love to show.

**ALL: Let us then with sweet accord
Praise our Savior, Christ the Lord,
Praise his name and sing again.
“Peace on earth, good will to men.”**

Prayer: Gracious Lord God, today we join our hearts and voices in praise to you for your great love in sending a Savior to take away the curse of death that was ours because of our sin. Take us back to the

Bethlehem manger where Jesus became a person like us that he might suffer and die, and win us back from the power of the devil. Many questions have been asked about the events at Christmas time, but the answers all lead to the manger, where our Savior and Redeemer, our Brother and Friend was born for us. We pray in the name of the King of kings and Lord of lords. Amen.

Assembly: “What Child Is This?”

1. What child is this, who, laid to rest,
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
While shepherds watch are keeping?

Children: This, this is Christ the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing:
Haste, haste to bring Him laud,
The babe, the son of Mary.

Part 1: WHERE DID IT BEGIN?

God asked, “What is this you have done?” Genesis 3:13

Narrator: Today you will hear many questions asked. Did you realize that already between the opening hymn and the responsive reading we’ve asked 11 questions? I guess that makes 12 now. That’s why the title of this service is What Child Is This? It’s a question we often hear asked at this time of year as many of us sing that beautiful Christmas carol. Fortunately, we will not only ask the questions, but we will answer them all as well.

Narrator: We want to give you answers today to the where, how, when, why, and what of Christmas. Each section of our service begins with a theme question followed with a question right out of the Bible. Our first question is titled **Part One: Where Did It Begin?** The reason we are worshiping here today dates all the way back to the Garden of Eden. Here we find in Genesis 3:13 a very probing question:

All children: “What is this you have done?”

Narrator: Close your eyes and picture a mother walking into a child’s bedroom only to find that her three year old daughter has just given herself a haircut. The floor is covered with golden locks of hair, and her head is covered with bare spots. Would you blame the mother for exclaiming, “What is this you have done?” Those few words sum up her anger, frustration, and disappointment in the child.

Narrator: Now picture the Almighty God looking you in the eye and asking you, “What is this you have done?” No doubt those words would cause your knees to shake. Hearing God voice his anger, frustration, and disappointment in you sounds frightening. Yet those are the exact words he spoke to Eve after she had eaten of the forbidden fruit. God gave Adam and Eve everything they could ever wish for in their new home.

Recitation: Genesis 1:31, *“God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.”*

Narrator: But they were also given a will to do as they pleased. They could remain in perfect harmony with their Father, or they could pursue other paths. Sadly, they chose to follow Satan.

Recitation: Genesis 3:6 *“When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.”*

All Children: And God asked the question, **“What is this you have done?”**

Narrator: The sin was committed. The perfect life was over. The perfect gifts God had given would now become tainted with sin. Life would be difficult, and death would surely follow.

Narrator: But God’s love wasn’t spoiled. God promised Adam and Eve that he would come to their rescue.

Recitation: Genesis 3:15 *“I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.”*

Narrator: Do you know who would crush Satan’s head? It was Jesus. He would come to the rescue. He would take on himself the anger and punishment of God’s wrath. So we ask the question again, where did it all begin?

All Children: *Where did Christmas get its start?
Deep within God’s loving heart.
Man had sinned and lost it all,
But Christ would save us from the fall.*

Song by Children and Assembly: “Little Children, Can You Tell?” (Sheet music is included.)

1. (Assembly)

Little children, can you tell,
Do you know the story well,
Every girl and every boy,
Why the angels sing for joy,
On this Christmas morning?

2. (Children)

Yes, we know the story well;
Listen now, and hear us tell,
Every girl and every boy,
Why the angels sing for joy,
On this Christmas morning.

3. (Assembly)

For a little babe that day
Cradled in a manger lay,
Born on earth our Lord to be;

This the wondering angels see
On this Christmas morning.

4. (Children)

Joy our little hearts shall fill,
Peace and love, and all goodwill;
This fair Babe of Bethlehem,
Children loves, and blesses them,
On this Christmas morning.

Part 2: HOW DID THE NEWS SPREAD?

Isaiah asked, “Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?” Isaiah 53:1

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Part 3: WHEN DID THE MIRACLE HAPPEN?

Mary asked, “How will this be since I am a virgin?” Luke 1:34

Narrator: The stage was set. The plan was in its final stages. God had chosen the perfect place, the ideal people, and the exact time to fulfil his promise made in Eden. Like a flower beginning to open, we can see God’s plan unfold. Wouldn’t it make sense then to ask the next question:

All Children: When did the miracle happen?

Narrator: As we study the prophecies we notice that as they grew nearer to the birth of Christ, the prophecies became clearer and more detailed as God gave more and more hints of his plan. Then, at the exact moment when it was all ready, God put his plan in motion.

Recitation: Galatians 4:4,5 “*When the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.*”

Narrator: It began in Nazareth, a tiny village in northern Palestine, where a simple woman named Mary was engaged to a young man named Joseph. One day, as she was carrying out her daily chores, God’s messenger angel Gabriel came to her and told her:

Recitation: Luke 1:31 “*You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High.*”

Narrator: But Mary was startled and confused. So she asked the angel this question:

All Children: Luke 1:34 *“How will this be, since I am a virgin?”*

Recitation: Luke 1:35 *“The angels answered, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the Holy One to be born of you will be called the Son of God.’”*

Narrator: And Gabriel continued to tell her that God the Father and God the Holy Spirit would work miracles in her because with God nothing is impossible. What a wonderful beginning to the miracle of Christmas. Jesus was to be both the Son of Man, and the very Son of God.

Children Song: “Who Is He in Yonder Stall?” (Sheet music is included. These four stanzas are suggested.)

1. Who is He in yonder stall
At Whose feet the shepherds fall?
Who is He in deep distress,
Fasting in the wilderness?

Refrain

*'Tis the Lord! O wondrous story!
'Tis the Lord! the King of glory!
At His manger humbly fall,
Crown Him! Crown Him, Lord of all!*

2. Who is He the people bless
For His words of gentleness?
Who is He to Whom they bring
All the sick and sorrowing?

Refrain

3. Lo! at midnight, who is He
Prays in dark Gethsemane?
Who is He on yonder tree
Dies in grief and agony?

Refrain

4. Who is He that from the grave
Comes to heal and help and save?
Who is He that from His throne
Rules through all the world alone?

Refrain

Narrator: How did God get Mary and Joseph from Nazareth to Bethlehem? What happened the night Jesus was born? God’s plan came to earth when Jesus was placed in the womb of Mary. From that point

on, Jesus lived his life as a man. He felt pain, needed to eat and rest, shed tears, and became tired. His heart ached as he experienced every part of our lives. And it all began in the manger in Bethlehem on that Christmas night so long ago. That's where we can find the King of all people. This is how it happened.

Recitation: Luke 2:1-20 *“In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to his own town to register.*

“So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

“And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.’

Children’s Song: Are You Sleeping? (To the tune of “Are You Sleeping, Brother John?”)

1. Are you sleeping, are you sleeping, shepherds dear, shepherds dear?
Hear the angels singing, hear the angels singing, far and near, far and near.
2. Are you running, are you running, shepherds dear, shepherds dear?
See the baby Jesus, see the baby Jesus, He is here, He is here.
3. Are you praising, are you praising, shepherds dear, shepherds dear?
You have found the Savior, you have found the Savior, go in cheer, go in cheer.

Recitation (continued): *“Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.’*

“When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, ‘Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.’

“So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told” (Luke 2:1-20).

Children suggested song: “Will You Love the Baby Too?” (Choose from 60 songs at kremmerresources.com – Christmas programs)

All children: *When did God's great plan unfold?
With the words that Gabriel told.
Thus began God's saving story
That would show God's awesome glory.*

Part 4: WHY DID JESUS COME AT CHRISTMAS TIME?

**Jesus asked, "Did not the Christ have to suffer these things
and then enter his glory?" Luke 24:26**

Narrator: We have heard that Christmas story many times, yet it always seems fresh and new. But if the story from Luke 2 is all there was to Christmas that would leave us with little hope. The story only begins in Bethlehem. Jesus grew to be a man just like his friends in Nazareth. And when he was thirty years old, he began his ministry. For three years Jesus taught the people about the way to heaven. He healed the sick, comforted the poor, and even raised some to life again. All the while he was looking ahead to the fateful day when he would have to die on the cross for us. During that ministry Jesus asked his share of questions too. Can you remember when Jesus asked these questions?

Recitation by individual children: *Why do you worry about clothes? (Matthew 6:28)
Why are you so afraid? (Matthew 8:26)
Do you believe that I am able to do this? (Matthew 9:28)
Why did you doubt? (Matthew 14:31)
How many loaves do you have? (Matthew 15:34)
Who touched my clothes? (Mark 5:30)
Could you not keep watch for one hour? (Mark 14:37)
Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house? (Luke 2:49)
Why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for? (John 20:15)*

Narrator: Perhaps the gravest question our Savior ever asked was on Good Friday when he looked up from his cross to heaven and cried out loud:

Recitation: Matthew 27:46 *"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"*

Narrator: Those words summed up Jesus life and death. His own Father had forsaken him so he could bear our sins and accept all the punishment that was ours. How can we ever thank him? And that's why Jesus asked this question of the travelers on the road to Emmaus:

All children: Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?

Children suggested song: "How Far Is It to Bethlehem?" (At kremerresources.com—Christmas programs)

All children: *You ask why all this came to be
In Bethlehem's nativity?
God sent his holy, sinless Son
That he might rescue everyone.*

Congregation: “What Child Is This?”

2. Why lies He in such mean estate,
Where ox and donkeys are feeding?
Good Christians, fear, for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading.

Children: Nails, spears shall pierce him through,
The cross he bore for me, for you.
Hail, hail the Word made flesh,
The Babe, the Son of Mary.

Part 6: WHAT DO WE DO WITH JESUS?
Pilate asked, “What shall I do, then, with Jesus who is called Christ?”
Matthew 27:22

Narrator: We’ve asked and answered a lot of questions today in the Bible passages we shared and in the songs we sang. We have gone back to the time when sin first began. We have seen how the prophets kept the promise of a Savior alive. We were there when the angel Gabriel visited Mary and we certainly revisited the stable and once again enjoyed the account of Jesus’ birth. But all that is meaningless if we don’t put it to use. Interestingly, this last question was posed by Pontius Pilate at Jesus’ trial. No doubt it is a question people throughout the ages have also asked:

All children: “What shall I do, then, with Jesus who is called Christ?”

Narrator: Fortunately we have God’s Word where we can easily find answers to that question. So I ask the question once again, “What shall I do, then, with Jesus who is called Christ?”

Recitations by various grades:

Acts 16:31 “Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved, you and your household.”

Ephesians 6:24 “Grace to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with an undying love.”

John 10:27 “My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.”

Matthew 28:19,20 “Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”

All Children: What will we do with Jesus? We will believe him, love him, listen to him, follow him, and tell others about him.

Children’s song: Tune of “Were You There?”

1. Were you there in that stable long ago?
Were you there in that stable long ago?
O . . . , it often causes me to praise him, praise him, praise him.
Were you there in that stable long ago?

2. Were you there when the angels sang on high?
Were you there when the angels sang on high?
O . . . , it often causes me to praise him, praise him, praise him.
Were you there when the angels sang on high?
3. Were you there when the shepherds saw the Babe?
Were you there when the shepherds saw the Babe?
O . . . , it often causes me to praise him, praise him, praise him.
Were you there when the shepherds saw the Babe?
4. Were you there when the Wise Men gave their gifts?
Were you there when the Wise Men gave their gifts?
O . . . , it often causes me to praise him, praise him, praise him.
Were you there when the Wise Men gave their gifts?

All Children: *What shall we do, then, with this Babe
Who lies on yonder manger hay?
We love him, share him, and adore,
Both here on earth and evermore!*

Prayers, Lord's Prayer, Benediction and Announcements

Congregation: What Child Is This?

3. So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh,
Come, peasant, king, to own him.
The King of kings salvation brings,
Let loving hearts enthrone him.

All: **Raise, raise a song on high,
The virgin sings her lullaby
Joy, joy for Christ is born,
The babe, the Son of Mary.**