

SAMPLE PAGES



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The Wonder of It All!

INTRODUCTION

Luke 1:35 sets the theme of this Christmas worship service, “*The Holy One to be born will be called the Son of God.*” Each year we share a moment together to listen to the message that our children tell about the birth of the Savior. This service is no exception. Here we will once again be reminded of the love that came down from heaven on the first Christmas night.

“*The Wonder of It All!*” is a children’s service designed to accommodate any size group of children from the smallest Sunday school to the largest grade school. The theme is simple: **it’s about babies!** How many times don’t our eyes focus on the manger Babe during this season? This service expands on that theme and begins with a number of Bible characters telling us about miraculous births and infancies. We meet Moses, Sarah, Hannah, and Zechariah as we take a careful look at several births mentioned in the Scripture. Finally we focus on the most miraculous birth of all, the incarnation of Jesus Christ. There in the manger on the first Christmas night we truly behold the wonder of it all. And to make that wonder even more precious to our hearts, we discover that the Baby in Bethlehem’s manger was intended for us, sinful creatures in need of God’s grace and mercy.

CHARACTERS

In place of a narrator, this service introduces several costumed Bible characters who speak to us. Each relates how his or her life foreshadowed the coming of the Savior. The characters include Moses (who himself had a miraculous infancy and who wrote about the first promise of the Savior in his book of Genesis), Sarah (whom God blessed with a long-promised Son, just as Jesus’ birth was prophesied from long ago), Hannah (who willingly gave up her long-awaited son to serve God’s people, a reflection of the Father’s sacrifice of his own beloved Son), and Zechariah (who was promised a son that would prepare the way for the Messiah).

The final two characters are Mary and Joseph who tell of the miraculous birth of their Son, our Savior. This section also includes the Luke 2 Christmas story.

There are a few sections for a “Presenter”. This could be a student, pastor, or other individual.

RECITATIONS

Throughout the service there are Scripture recitations made by the students that reinforce the story being related by the Bible characters.

SONGS

The musical portion of this service is filled with options! This service comes complete with more than enough song selections for you to use. Throughout the service you will notice options that are given. Choose those that best suit your children and congregation. (Songs not used may be inserted at pre-service music or used during the offering.)

Student song selections:

- The Wonder of Love* (Theme song, possible three part, - with accompaniment on disk)
- The Birthday of a King* (Perhaps lower grades – with accompaniment on disk)
- The Simple Birth* (Perhaps middle grades, possible 2-part, – with accompaniment on disk)
- The Gift* (Perhaps upper grades – with accompaniment on disk)
- Glory to God* (May be sung with entire congregation – sheet music is provided on this disk)
- A Child’s Prayer* (NOT sung but recited by a single girl)
- Alleluia Medley* (Closing song by all children)

Congregation Songs:

- A Great and Mighty Wonder* (Processional – four stanzas)
- The Advent of Our King* (Three stanzas)
- On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry* (Three stanzas)

The Angel Gabriel (Three stanzas)
Glory to God the Angels Sang (Two stanzas – sheet music provided)
Silent Night
Praise God the Lord, You Sons of Men (Recessional – four stanzas)

HANDBELL MUSIC

The following selections have been chosen as handbell pieces that your children's or adult handbell choirs can present for this service.

ADVENT SERVICES OUTLINES

This worship service comes with outlines that present the theme "The Wonder of It All" throughout the Advent season. These are not completed sermons, but rather idea outlines that can be used. They are written to build toward the Christmas celebration service by the children.

OTHER ITEMS AVAILABLE

Banner

This is a completely finished full color banner printed in brilliant color. A suggestion would be to place the banner at the church entry or beside the pulpit throughout the Advent season and then move it to the center of the chancel for the children's service.

Birth Announcement Cards

In keeping with the theme of babies, this full color announcement card announces the birth of Jesus in the Bethlehem manger. Cards are designed to be completed by the students and handed out to worshipers following the children's service.

Worship Bulletins

Full color worship bulletin designed especially for this service are available in 11" and 14".

SPECIAL THANKS

Special thanks are also in order for Charles Cushinery who wrote and performed the instrumental accompaniment for all the songs.

Special thanks to Karen Maio who assisted in transposing "Glory to God the Angels Sang"

Special thanks to the students at Trinity Lutheran School, West Bend, WI.

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The Wonder of It All!

Congregation song: "A Great and Mighty Wonder"

A great and mighty wonder,
A full and holy cure:
The Virgin bears the Infant
With virgin honor pure!
Refrain: *Repeat the hymn again:*
 "To God on high be glory
 And peace on earth to men!"

The Word becomes incarnate
And yet remains on high,
And cherubim sing anthems
To shepherds from the sky.
Refrain:

While still they sing your Monarch,
Those bright angelic bands,
Rejoice you dales and mountains,
You oceans, clap your hands.
Refrain:

Since He came all to ransom,
By all be He adored,
The Infant born in Bethl'em,
The Savior and the Lord.
Refrain:

Invocation

Responsive Scripture Readings

P: Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel. (Is. 7:14)

C: *The holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.* (Luke 1:35)

P: You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. (Lk. 1:31)

C: *The holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.* (Luke 1:35)

P: The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. (John. 1:14)

C: *The holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.* (Luke 1:35)

P: He made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. (Philippians 2:7)

C: *The holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.* (Luke 1:35)

All: *When the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law. . . And the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.* (Galatians 4:4; Luke 1:35)

Prayer: Gracious Lord Jesus, ruler of the universe, we come before your throne today in awe and wonder as we celebrate the miracle of the incarnation. Through your great love and wisdom you saw fit to use the miracle of birth, a baby boy born to an earthly mother and a heavenly Father. We thank you for granting us Christmas joy and comfort as we worship and praise you for the gift that was placed in that manger bed. Bless our message today as we once again reflect on **the wonder of it all**. We ask this in your name, our Brother, our Friend, our Savior, the most wonderful gift of all. Amen.

All children: “The Wonder of Love”

Hush! Can you picture that village;
Quiet and still all around?
Just the faint cry of a new Baby Boy;
A whimper, but welcoming sound.
REFRAIN: O the wonder, the wonder, the wonder of love!
This Baby was coming for me!
O the wonder, the wonder, the wonder of love!
That Jesus was setting me free.
Amazing! We’re praising! Our voices are raising!
Glory to the Lamb, the Great I Am,
The wonder, the wonder of love!

There was no pomp and no glory.
There was no throne, crown, or ring.
Just a crude box in an old cattle stall,
That held the Creator and King!
REFRAIN:

Angels burst out from the heavens
Shouting God’s praises above.
Shepherds were told the good news that they brought
Of peace, joy, and wonderful love.
REFRAIN:

Now I can share in God’s wonder!
Now I can tell of that sight!
Now I can know that my Jesus was born
That wonderful first Christmas night.
REFRAIN:

Presenter: Hello, and merry Christmas to all. Today (Tonight) we hope to share some thoughts with you about what we happen to see much of at Christmas time: a baby! Did you ever wonder how many Christmas cards, pictures, and paintings have a baby on them? In fact, it may be true that at this very moment each of us has a miniature baby boy safely tucked in a tiny manger somewhere under our Christmas trees. Of course, we know that the cards, pictures and mangers all hold the very same baby. That’s because at Christmas we are once again reminded that Jesus came to earth as a tiny, tearful, helpless, infant baby boy, who probably weighed only a few pounds and measured only a few inches long. Like any newborn, he was in immediate need of cleaning, warmth, feeding, and maybe even changing.

Today [Tonight] we want to present the miracle of the baby. First, we will travel back in the Bible as we discover some very miraculous births. Then we will take a close look at the most wonderful birth of all, the birth of Jesus, the Son of God.

Lower grades song: “The Birthday of a King”

In the little village of Bethlehem,
There lay a Child one day;
And the sky was bright with a holy light
O’er the place where Jesus lay.
Refrain: *Alleluia! O how the angels sang.
Alleluia! How it rang!
And the sky was bright with a holy light
‘Twas the birthday of a King.*

‘Twas a humble birthplace, but O how much
God gave to us that day,
From the manger bed what a path has led,
What a perfect, holy way.
Refrain:

The Wonder of Miracle Births

Moses

Character: Moses (He is holding the small basket he was placed in. The basket may be painted black for tar on the bottom half. There may be a striped cloth hanging from it.)

My name is Moses. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, I wrote the first five books of the Bible. It isn’t surprising that those books contain my life story as well. That story goes all the way back to my birthday, perhaps the saddest day in my mother’s life. By decree, the Egyptians gave the order to drown all Hebrew baby boys in the Nile River. I was one of those babies and my mother knew that well. But it was by the grace of God, and his miraculous hand, that I was placed in this little basket called an “ark”. And so the river of death became the water that saved my life. Not only my sister, Miriam, but God watched over me as well, until the daughter of Pharaoh, who eventually became my adopted mother, came to my rescue. I’m often reminded of those days, and I can’t help wondering how God could have planned each detail of my journey. He’s the same God that planned to send his own Son. I can’t help but raise my arms to heaven and think back on **the wonder of it all!**

Did you know I was the first to tell about the coming of that Messiah, the Savior? I wrote about what happened in the beautiful Garden of Eden, and how Adam and Eve lived in the ideal paradise until they chose to sin against God. Inspired by the Lord I wrote Genesis 3:15 where we see the result of that sin. This is the first time the Savior is promised.

Recitation: Moses wrote, “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.” (Genesis 3:15) (Exit Moses)

Congregation song: “The Advent of Our King”

The advent of our King
Our prayers must now employ,
And we must hymns of welcome sing
In strains of holy joy.

The everlasting Son
Incarnate deigns to be;
Himself a servant's form puts on
To set His servants free.

His wondrous works and ways
He made by Moses known,
But sent the world His truth and grace
By His beloved Son.

Sarah

Character: Sarah (She is holding a stack of folded towels. She looks old and tired.)

I'm Sarai. To be more exact, I once was Sarai. Now you might better know me by the name Sarah. I was the blessed wife of Abraham. I faithfully accompanied my husband as we journeyed for hundreds of miles to the land that the Lord had promised. We left everything behind that was near and dear to us because the Lord promised to bless us with a fruitful family.

Recitation: God said, "I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you . . . and all the people of the earth will be blessed through you." (Genesis 12:2,3)

Sarah: There was only one little problem. Abraham and I had no children. I was 90 years old when three men came to visit our tent. They told my husband about the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. But they also said that by the same time next year, I would give birth to my first child. But I was old and well beyond the days of child bearing. I knew it could never be, so I laughed to myself. That's when the Lord looked straight at my husband.

Recitation: Then the Lord said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh and say, "Will I really have a child, now that I am old?" Is anything too hard for the Lord?" (Genesis 18:13)

Sarah: It was then I witnessed for myself **the wonder of it all**. Is anything too hard for the Lord? Not at all! Just ask Isaac, my very own son! But he has done miracles far more wonderful than giving an old woman a baby. He took a maid named Mary, a virgin, and planted the seed for the Savior of all nations within her. Is anything too hard for the Lord? Not when you are the Lord of wonders! (Exit Sarah)

Song middle grades: "The Simple Birth" (Possible 2-part on last verse) from "Now Sing We Now Rejoice"

A little Child was born in a stall;
A little Child was born in a stall.
He brought to this world redemption for all,
He brought to this world redemption for all.

Yes, God's own Son in a manger did lay,
Yes, God's own Son in a manger did lay.
He slept in a cradle of wood and of hay,
He slept in a cradle of wood and of hay.

He smiled upon us, His eyes filled with love,
He smiled upon us, His eyes filled with love.
With peace and with love, sent to man from above,
With peace and with love, sent to man from above.
With peace and with love, sent to man from above.

*“Glory to God,” the angels sing,
Praises to Christ, the heav’nly King;
Peace be on earth, good will to men,
Goodwill to men.”*

Little, the loving mother dreamed of their meaning then,
How He should die on Calv’ry, die for the sins of men.
Down through the weary ages, out from the manger bed
Streams all the light of heaven, soon o’er the world to spread.
Chorus:

Prayers

NOTE: At this point you have two options. If time allows both would be appropriate.

OPTION 1: Congregation song: “*Silent Night*”

Option One: The entire congregation may join in singing “*Silent Night*”.

Silent night, holy night,
All is calm, all is bright.
Round yon virgin mother and Child.
Holy Infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace. (Repeat)

Silent night, holy night,
Shepherds quake at the sight;
Glories stream from heavens afar,
Heavenly hosts sing alleluia,
Christ the Savior is born! (Repeat)

Silent night, holy night,
Son of God loves pure light.
Radiant beams from Thy holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth. (Repeat)

OPTION 2: Solo recitation: “*A Child’s Prayer*” author Unknown

Option Two: An adult male and one girl may recite “*A Child’s Prayer*” while the remainder of the children hum “*Silent Night*” in the background. If you choose Option Two consult timing directions. Lower lights for either option used.)

Male voice:

A house so quiet, so humble,
A child beside her bed,
Her hands clasped tightly . . . time to pray,
So she bowed her little head.

Girl’s voice:

Happy birthday, Jesus!
Daddy said that you were near,
And that you had a birthday
This time every year.

He told me how you listen to
Every word we say,
And that you hear us call,
In the night . . . or in the day.

He explained how bad they hurt you
And made you suffer so,
But said you let them do it,
For girls like me . . . I know.

He told me of the manger they put you in,
I'd let you have my blanket
If I was there . . .
Back then.

He said that you were watching
Everything we do . . .
Him, Mommy, Granny,
And our new baby, too.

I like what daddy told me
Of how you healed the lame,
And that you don't have to have
Any wealth or fame.

He told me you were so awfully good,
And then he made me cry . . .
He said they nailed you to a cross,
They wanted you to die.

And then he made me happy when he said
You came back again;
Daddy said Christmas is what we celebrate
Because on that day you were born.

So I hope I'm not too late
To wish you Happy Birthday, Dear Jesus.

Benediction

Closing song by all children: "Alleluia Medley" Congregation joins on last "Alleluia" melody:

"Alleluia!"

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Angel choirs, hymns are singing! Heav'ns rejoicing, tidings bringing!
Angel choirs, hymns are singing! Heav'ns rejoicing, tidings bringing!

"He Is Lord" (Upper Grades)

Prince of Peace, Prince of Peace!
He was born in Bethlehem our Prince of Peace.
Ev'ry knee shall bow ev'ry tongue confess,
Our Lord, the Prince of Peace.

Praise our King, praise our King!
Let us worship and adore and praise our King!
Ev'ry knee shall bow ev'ry tongue confess,
That Jesus Christ is King!

"This Little Light of Mine" (Lower Grades)

This Christmas light of mine, I'm gonna let it, let it shine.
This Christmas light of, light of mine, I'm gonna let it, let it shine.
This Christmas light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine.
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine!

Hold it high so all can see, I'm gonna let it, let it shine.
Hold it high so all can see, I'm gonna let it, let it shine.
Hold it high so all can see, I'm gonna let it shine.
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine!

"God Is So Good" (Some Children)

God is so good. God is so good.
God is so good, He's so good to me.

(Add more children to increase volume)

He sent His Son, He sent His Son,
He sent His Son, He's so good to me.

(Include all children – high volume)

Coming again, coming again,
Coming again, He's so good to me.

Congregation Rises and Joins: "Alleluia" reprise

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
(Remain standing in silence)

Recessional congregation song: "Praise God the Lord, You Sons of Men"

Praise God the Lord, you sons of men,
Before His highest throne;
Today He opens heav'n again
And gives us His own Son. And gives us His own Son.

He serves that I a lord may be;
A great exchange indeed!
Could Jesus' love do more for me
To help me in my need? To help me in my need?

He opens us again the door
Of Paradise today;
The angel guards the gate no more.
To God our thanks we pay. To God our thanks we pay.

He leaves the heav'nly Father's throne,
The wonder of it all;
And in a manger, poor and lone,
Is born the Infant small. Is born the Infant small.