An Angel Announces Jesus’ Birth

Bible Focus: Matthew 1:18-24; Luke 1:26-38, 46, 47
Bible Memory: Matthew 2:1, 2

“Jesus was born in the town of Bethlehem. . . . We came to worship him.” (ICB)
“Jesus was born in Bethlehem. . . . We . . . are come to worship him.” (KJV)

Life Focus: ♡ We can share good news about Jesus.

Heart to Heart

Sometimes surprises—even happy ones—can be frightening. Mary and Joseph were both surprised and frightened by Gabriel’s visit and his announcement. Yet as startling as Gabriel’s announcement was, Mary and Joseph both yielded to God’s plan as delivered by the heavenly messenger. May we, like that young couple, accept God’s plan as well, a plan announced in His Word and one which we now announce to the children.

Bible Background

Nazareth was an insignificant village in Galilee, but God sent a messenger to two residents of that village. Mary and Joseph were engaged to be married. At that time, an engagement was such a sacred commitment that only a bill of divorcement could break it. The appearance of the angel to Joseph confirmed that the child who was being carried by Mary was of divine origin. The angel told both Mary and Joseph that the expected child should be named Jesus.

Lesson 1 at a Glance

**Step 1**
Getting Started
Use one or more of these activities to help children explore good news.

- **Quick Step**
  - Tell-a-Friend
  - Megaphones
  - Station S-T-A-R (Unit center)

- Bible-Times Home

**HeartShaper Materials**
- Make-n-Share pp. 3 and 4 and stickers
- Scout puppet, Resources Sheet 3 microphone, press-pass name tag pattern (p. 117)
- Resources Sheet 1 house scene 1a

**Other Materials**
- blunt-tip scissors, crayons or washable markers, tape or glue sticks
- supplies for unit center (see p. 8), paper, star stickers, pencils, hole punch, yarn, blunt-tip scissors, clear adhesive covering
- shoe box, blocks, bits of material, blunt-tip scissors

**Step 2**
Bible Discovery
Use all of these activities to help children tell about a time when Mary and Joseph heard good news.

- Sing and Pray

- Bible Time An Angel Announces Jesus’ Birth

- Bible Review

- Bible Memory

**HeartShaper Materials**
- Resources CD, Sheet 1 house scene 1a, Sheet 2 story figures 1b–1d

**Other Materials**
- CD player, microphone (toy or real), Bible, 3 jumbo craft sticks, tape or glue, 9” x 12” gift bag

**Step 3**
Grow and Go
Use one or more of these activities to help children share good news they know about baby Jesus.

- **Quick Step**
  - Beanbag Toss

- Pick-and-Tell Game

- Sing Out!

- Closing the Hour

**HeartShaper Materials**
- none

**Other Materials**
- beanbag

**Beep & Bongos**
- Resources Sheet 3 Pick-and-Tell picture cards 1e–1h

**Bible Time**
- Resources CD

**Heart Tugs**
- Issue 1

**Wonder Pray Sing & Bible Time**
- Active Play

**Active Play**
- Blocks & Buildings

**Music**
- none
Today we are going to learn about an angel who told some good news about Jesus. When we have good news, we like to share it with our friends. Let’s make megaphones. Then we can share good news. Help each child make a megaphone. Tell something good that happened to you during the week. Announce it through your megaphone. Then have the children take turns announcing good news through their megaphones. Applaud each announcement.

- How did you feel when you shared your good news?
- Who else might like to hear your good news?

We can share good news about Jesus. That’s the best news to share!

Station S-T-A-R (A unit center)
The Bible tells us about a time when an angel gave good news to a woman and a man. Let’s visit our own news station, Station S-T-A-R, where the news is always good. Let Scout lead the children to the news desk, where they will make their own press-pass name tags. These can be used throughout the unit. Allow children to add star stickers and write their names on the passes. Cover each press pass with clear adhesive covering. Punch holes and thread yarn through the holes to tie as lanyards. Help children explore what happens in a newsroom—people talk into microphones, people write news articles, cameras film news events, and so forth.

- Have you ever visited a radio or television station?
- What good news would you tell a news reporter to say?

Bible-Times Home
Today we will learn about a young woman named Mary. Maybe Mary was at home dusting furniture or washing clothes when she got some good news. When we are at home, we can share good news about Jesus. Let’s use our blocks to build a house like Mary’s home. Show the children put blocks inside for tables or chairs or beds. Help them use scissors to cut bits of material for blankets or tablecloths or dust cloths.

- Have you ever heard some good news when you were at your house?

What was the good news?

Especially for 4s!
Provide a toy playhouse and people. As children play, ask them about good news they hear at home. What good news does your mother say in the kitchen? What good news can you tell about your bedroom? What good news can you say about Jesus?
Bible Discovery (20–25 minutes)

Step 2 • Use all of these activities to help children tell about a time when Mary and Joseph heard good news.

Sing and Pray
Sing: “Happy Birthday, Jesus” and “We Came to Worship Him”
Pray, Dear God, please help us to hear some of the best news ever told.
In Jesus’ name, amen.

Say, Do you have some good news? Will you share it with me? Talk into this microphone, please. Hold the microphone out as though interviewing each child. Listen carefully and you will hear some very good news from God that an angel shared with Mary and Joseph. You can help me as we show happy or surprised faces.

Bible Time
(Have children show happy or surprised expressions on their faces when indicated. Open your Bible.) In the Bible we read that Mary (show 1b) was a young woman who pleased God. That means she made God happy because she loved God very much and always tried to obey Him. (Show happy faces.) Mary was making plans to marry a man named Joseph. (Show 1c.) Joseph also loved and obeyed God.

(Show looks of surprise.) Mary did not understand what Gabriel meant.
Gabriel said, “Don’t be afraid. God is pleased with you. He is going to give you a baby boy. You are to name the baby Jesus.”

The angel told Mary that the baby was to be a special child. Mary was happy. (Show happy faces.) Mary told the angel that she would do whatever God wanted her to do. Then the angel went away. (Remove 1c and 1d.)
Joseph was sleeping. (Stand 1c.) When Joseph found out that Mary was going to have a baby, he was surprised. (Show surprise.) Mary was to be Joseph’s wife. What did God want Joseph to do?

(Lay 1c in front of house scene.) In a dream, an angel told Joseph that he should take Mary as his wife. The angel also told Joseph to name the baby Jesus, because this baby would save people from their sins. When Joseph awoke (stand 1c and have children open their eyes), Joseph did just what the angel said to do.

(Show happy faces.) Mary and Joseph were happy to hear the good news that Jesus was to be born.

Bible Review
Let children take turns holding the story figures. Ask review questions and have children hold up the figures that give the correct answers.

• Who brought the announcements from God? (Gabriel, an angel)
• Who was going to have a baby? (Mary)
• Who heard the angel in a dream? (Joseph)
• Who did what the angel said to do? (Mary and Joseph)

Bible Memory
We can share good news about Jesus when we say our Bible Memory words. Turn to Matthew 2:1, 2 in your Bible. Point to the verse. Say the verse in short, rhythmic phrases, allowing children to repeat each phrase after you.
Life Focus

We can share good news about Jesus.

Quick Step  Bible Beanbag Toss

Just like the angel Gabriel, we can share good news about Jesus. Let’s share some good-news words from today’s Bible lesson. Have the children stand in a circle. Toss the beanbag to one child and say “Gabriel.” Have that child toss the beanbag to another child and say another word from the Bible story. Words that might be said include Mary, Joseph, angel, Gabriel, Jesus, baby, afraid, surprised, happy, special, save.

• What good news about Jesus can you tell a friend this week?
• What are some ways you can share good news about Jesus? Prompt children to name ways, such as drawing and sharing pictures, talking about Jesus, singing about Jesus, and so forth.

Pick-and-Tell Game

Before class, put the four picture cards in a bag. Let’s play a game with some Bible story pictures cards. We can share good news about Jesus. Have children take turns picking picture cards from the bag. Each child should look at the card he has selected and then use that card to tell some good news about Jesus. Examples: “This card shows Mary. She was to be the mother of Jesus.” “Good news! This is Joseph. An angel told him to name the baby Jesus.” If a child pulls the card that says Jesus, the child can tell any good news about Jesus.

• What made Jesus such a special baby? (He is God’s Son. He came to save people.)
• What good news can you tell about baby Jesus?

Especially for 4s!

Four-year-olds may have trouble naming good news. Have them take turns selecting cards and holding them up for everyone to see. When a card is shown, ask the children to name who or what is on the card. Then you can use that card to verbalize for the children some good news about Jesus.

Sing Out!

Let’s learn a song about the birth of baby Jesus. When we sing this song to others, we can share good news about Jesus. Listen to the Bible Memory song, “We Came to Worship Him.” Review the words with the children. Sing it again. Then give children their Tell-a-Friend megaphones. Encourage them to sing loudly through their megaphones so that others will hear the words.

• Do you feel happy when you sing about Jesus?
• Who can you sing this song to and tell about baby Jesus?

Closing the Hour

• Be sure children who are leaving now have their activity projects.
• Give each child’s parents a copy of today’s Heart Tags. Mention the “Angel Tells Good News” maze they can do with their child. NOTE: A Family Together Time page is available online for families to download. See www.heartshaper.com.
**An Angel Announces Jesus’ Birth**

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“Jesus was born in Bethlehem. . . . We . . . are come to worship him.” (KJV)

**Life Focus:** We can share good news about Jesus.

**Heart to Heart (for the Extra Hour teacher)**

Sometimes surprises—even happy ones—can be frightening. Mary and Joseph were both surprised and frightened by Gabriel’s visit and his announcement. Yet as startling as Gabriel’s announcement was, Mary and Joseph both yielded to God’s plan as delivered by the heavenly messenger. May we, like that young couple, accept God’s plan as well, a plan announced in His Word and one which we now announce to the children.

**Bible Background**

Nazareth was an insignificant village in Galilee, but God sent a messenger to two residents of that village. Mary and Joseph were engaged to be married. At that time, an engagement was such a sacred commitment that only a bill of divorcement could break it. The appearance of the angel to Joseph confirmed that the child who was being carried by Mary was of divine origin. The angel told both Mary and Joseph that the expected child should be named Jesus.

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### Lesson 1 at a Glance—Extra Hour

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**Pre-K & K Teacher, Unit 1, Lesson 1, Extra Hour**

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More! Getting Started (10–15 minutes)

Step 1 • Use one or more of these activities to help children explore good news.

Transition Time
• Greet new arrivals with enthusiasm. Be sure each child has an identification tag.
• Show a torn-up newspaper. Have the Scout puppet look at you sadly. Say, *Scout is sad because he chewed up a paper that had good news written inside. Let’s cheer up Scout by telling good news about Jesus.* Let children take turns doing so.
• Follow your usual procedures for taking children to the restroom and serving a snack.

Quick Step  Good News Jump
In today’s Bible story we are learning about a family who had good news to share. Let’s play a game to see if we can tell good news. Have the children sit in a circle. Say a statement. If the statement is good news, the children can jump up. If the statement is not good news, they can remain seated. Possible statements: We are going to a party today. We have to go to the grocery store. My mommy just had a baby boy. It is time for bed. Scout chewed up the newspaper. We are learning about baby Jesus today.
  • Do you have good news you want to share? Allow children to tell good news. Other children can jump up after the news is told.
  ♥ We can share good news about Jesus. That is the best news of all!

Good News Show-and-Tell
Sometimes when we want to share good news, we have show-and-tell time. I have some things in this bag that people use to share good news. Let’s see if you can guess what they are. We’ll look at the items and tell good news. Let each child reach into a bag, feel one item, and try to identify it. Pull out the items to show if the children’s guesses were right.
  • What good news might people read in a newspaper? (birth, wedding, or event announcements)
  • What good news can you tell with a baby blanket and baby doll? (A baby has been born.)
  • Have you ever sent a card telling good news? What did it say?
  ♥ We can share good news about Jesus. News about Jesus is the best news to show and tell!

Station S-T-A-R (A unit center)
In today’s Bible Time, we will hear how an angel gave good news to Mary and Joseph. Let’s visit station S-T-A-R, where the news is always good. We’ll do a maze and see if we can help the angel find Mary. Lead the children to the news desk, where they will be given a copy of this week’s* Heart Tugs.* Speak into the microphone to give instructions for the activity.
  • What good news do you think the angel was coming to tell Mary?
  • What good news can you tell someone? Let children tell good news using the microphone.
  ♥ We can share good news about Jesus. That’s the best news of all!

Especially for 4s!
Four-year-olds will have a harder time finding their way through the maze. Help them in one of these ways: Use your finger to guide their crayons on the right path. Draw a broken line along the right path and let them trace over it.

Materials
none

Teaching Tip
Some children may think a statement is good news, while others do not. Remind children that it is OK to have different opinions.

Materials
baby rattle, small baby doll, baby blanket, rolled-up newspaper, card, paper grocery sack

Heart Tugs Issue 1, crayons or colored pencils, microphone

Teaching Tip
Use a real or toy microphone, or make and use the microphone provided on Resources Sheet 3.
Life Focus

We can share good news about Jesus.

More! Bible Discovery (20–25 minutes)

Step 2 • Use all of these activities to help children tell about a time when Mary and Joseph heard good news.

More! Sing and Pray

Sing: “Happy Birthday, Jesus”

Pray, Dear God, help us to hear the good news that Mary and Joseph heard. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Whisper and ask, Did your friend ever tiptoe up behind you and then (louder and faster) say hello all of a sudden? Did she scare you a little even if she said something nice to you? The angel Gabriel didn’t sneak up behind Mary and Joseph, but he did surprise them with some good news. Let’s open our Bible and find out what happened. Open the Bible on your lap as you begin the lesson.

Bible Time—Another Way!

(Display Teaching Picture 1. Say the Bible story action rhyme below with a natural speaking voice or with a military cadence. Have the children repeat each line after you as they copy the motions. Once you begin a motion, maintain it for the length of times it would take you to repeat the line.)

Down from Heav’n an angel came. (Point up to Heaven.)

Gabriel, Gabriel was his name. (Point both thumbs to your chest.)

“Mary, Mary, good and kind. (Clap hands in approval.)

A girl like you is hard to find. (Put hand over eyebrows and look around.)

God will send a baby boy. (Fold arms to rock a pretend baby.)

Mary, you will have much joy. (Point to the corners of smiling mouth.)

Call Him Jesus, God’s own Son. (Point up.)

You’re His mother! You’re the one!” (Hug self.)

In a dream the angel spoke. (Lay head on hands as though sleeping.)

Joseph heard and then awoke. (Stretch as though waking from sleep.)

He took Mary as his wife. (Hook arms with person beside you.)

Cared for her through all his life. (Turn around with arms linked.)

Mary and Joseph God did choose. (Point to each child.)

Gabriel gave them good, good news! (Applaud loudly.)

More! Bible Review

Repeat the rhyme and have children act it out. Each time the rhyme is repeated, different children can play the parts of Gabriel, Mary, and Joseph. Use simple props to indicate who they are: a halo made of Christmas tinsel for the angel, a broom for Mary, a pillow for Joseph.

• What was the angel’s name? (Gabriel)

• What good news did the angel tell Mary and Joseph? (Jesus would be born.)

More! Bible Memory

Play “We Came to Worship Him.” Stand and walk in place while the song plays; sit while it plays again. Then stand and have the children sing along. Let them sit and sing it again.
Life Focus
❤️ We can share good news about Jesus.

Quick Step  Scout's Good News
Carrying the ribbons with his paws, bring Scout out for the children to see. He is excited, bounding and looking around. Talk to the puppet. Scout, why are you so excited? Where have you been? What do you have there? Hold out your hand for Scout to open his paws and drop the ribbons in. Then let him whisper in your ear. Oh, this is good news! Let me tell the children. Set Scout aside as you tell the story. Lay the ribbons near you.

When Scout was out for his morning run on the next block, he heard lots of laughing and happy talk. Scout stopped to see what was happening. He walked into his friend’s backyard, and guess what he saw? Let children guess. Puppies! Seven brand new puppies! How many boys? Count the blue ribbons. How many girls? Count the pink ribbons.

The children in the family were so happy about the puppies that they were giving their friends pieces of ribbon to announce the good news. When the children saw Scout, they said, “Scout, you’re a good friend. You can have some ribbons too!

(Pick up Scout and talk to the puppet again.) Scout, you are a good dog. You brought the ribbons for us to see. Now you have shared the news with us. Thanks for sharing the news. Good boy! (Give Scout pats on the head.)

• Who shared good news with Scout?
  We can share good news too. ❤️ We can share good news about Jesus.
• What good news about Jesus will you share this week?

An Angel Visits
The angel Gabriel shared good news with both Mary and Joseph. Let’s color a picture that shows Gabriel telling good news. We can give our pictures to other people, and then ❤️ we can share good news about Jesus. Give each child a copy of today’s Bible story coloring page and crayons or markers. As children color, talk about the Bible story. Let children spread glue on the angel’s hair or clothing. Then sprinkle gold or silver glitter on it. Ask each child to show his picture and share one good thing about baby Jesus. Set aside the art to dry.

• What good news did Gabriel tell Mary and Joseph?
• Who will you give your picture to? What good news about Jesus will you tell?

Especially for 4s!
Four-year-olds may need extra help with the glue and glitter. Help them control the amount of glue they use. Allow children to put the glitter wherever they desire—not just on the hair or clothing.

Saying Good-bye
• As children wait for parents, repeat the Bible story action rhyme.
• Be sure children have projects made in class, but keep their press-pass name tags to use throughout the unit.
• Give parents this week’s Heart Tags. Encourage them to ask their children to share with them some good news about Jesus. NOTE: A Family Together Time page is available online for families to download. See www.heartshaper.com.

Materials
Scout puppet, 7 short lengths of ribbon (4 pastel blue, 3 pink)

Resources
CD Lesson 1
Bible story coloring page printable file, crayons or washable markers, glue sticks, gold or silver glitter

Teaching Tip
Colored sugar sprinkles work well in place of glitter. The sprinkles are safe to use and can be found in most grocery stores with the cake decorating supplies.

Cleanup
As you see children picking up toys, give award stickers.