



**Bible Point** ▶

# The shepherds were glad that Jesus is God's special gift.

## Bible Verse

“Jesus was born in Bethlehem” (Matthew 2:1a).

## Growing Closer to Jesus

- Children will
- dress up and act out being shepherds,
  - sing a song about Jesus' birth,
  - help Whiskers learn he is important to God, and
  - say a prayer to thank God for sending Jesus.

## Teacher Enrichment

### Bible Basis

- Angels announce Jesus' birth to shepherds.

**Luke  
2:8-15**



What a thrill it must have been for humble sheepherders on a Judean hillside to be witnesses of the angelic announcement of Jesus' birth! Often looked down upon by others in Jewish society, shepherds were typically thought of as riffraff. The testimony of a shepherd wasn't even accepted in Jewish courts because shepherds were deemed to be less than trustworthy.

Because of that, seldom were important events announced to shepherds first! Once they got over their fright when the angels appeared, the shepherds excitedly headed to Bethlehem to see if what the angels announced was really true. And of course, we know what they found.

The angels' announcement was something to celebrate back then, and is still something to celebrate with your preschoolers today as they're learning about what Jesus' birth means to them.


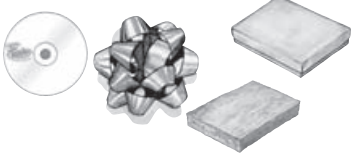


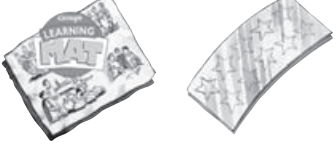


### Prayer

- Read 1 Peter 5:2. How does this verse elevate the image of a shepherd over the reputation of shepherds in Jesus' culture?
- How does God turn people's lives around today?
- Pray: Lord, thank you for touching my life. Work through me to touch the lives of my students as I...

### Before the Lesson

- Collect the necessary items for the activities you plan to use, referring to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies listed in the chart on the next page.
- Make photocopies of the “Today I Learned...” handout (at the end of this lesson) to send home with your children.
- Pray for the children in your class and for God's direction as you teach the lesson.

# This Lesson at a Glance

	What Children Will Do	Classroom Supplies	Learning Lab Supplies
<b>Welcome Time</b>	<b>Welcome!</b> —Receive name tags, and be greeted by the teacher.	“Angel Name Tags” (p. 23), scissors, marker, safety pins or tape	
<b>Let’s Get Started</b>  Direct children to one or more of the optional activities until everyone arrives.	<b>Option 1: Shepherd’s Corner</b> —Experience a day in the life of a shepherd.	Bible storybook, bathrobes, towels, belts, yardsticks, wool yarn pieces, bread, cheese slices, wet wipes	
	<b>Option 2: Sheep Puppets</b> —Make sheep puppets, and hear about the shepherds who went to see Jesus.	Old socks, glue, black marker, newsprint, cotton balls or fiberfill stuffing	
	<b>Option 3: Modeling-Dough Sheep</b> —Make a sheepfold, and talk about the shepherds who went to see Jesus.	Modeling dough	
	<b>Pick-Up Time</b> —Sing a song as they pick up toys and gather for Bible Story Time.	CD player	
<b>Bible Story Time</b>	<b>Setting the Stage</b> —March, and sing a song about Jesus’ birth.	Yardsticks, blocks or rhythm instruments, CD player	
	<b>Bible Song and Prayer Time</b> —Sing a song, bring out the Bible, and pray together.	Bible, CD player	
	<b>Hear and Tell the Bible Story</b> —Pretend to be shepherds as they hear how the shepherds went to see Jesus.	Bible, fiberfill stuffing	
	<b>Do the Bible Story</b> —Play a following game, and decorate the <i>Learning Mat</i> .	Fiberfill stuffing, crayons, markers, glue	
 <b>Closing</b>	<b>Woolly Whiskers</b> —Tell Whiskers the story of the shepherds.	Fiberfill stuffing, tape	
	<b>Five Happy Shepherds</b> —Learn a finger play about the shepherds.	Washable markers	

\*See the end of this lesson for extra-time ideas and supplies.

## Welcome Time

**SUPPLIES:** “Angel Name Tags” (p. 23), scissors, marker, safety pins or tape

- Kneel down and make eye contact with children as they arrive.
- Greet each child individually with an enthusiastic smile.
- Thank each child for coming to class today.
- As children arrive, ask them about last week’s “Today I Learned...” discussion. Use questions such as “What did you tell your family about Jesus’ birth?” or “What special gifts did your family give each other?”
- Say: **Today we’re going to learn that ► the shepherds were glad that Jesus is God’s special gift.**
- Hand out the angel name tags children made during Lesson 1, and help children attach the name tags to their clothing. If some of the name tags were damaged or if children weren’t in class that week, have them make new name tags using the photocopiable handout.
- Direct children to the Let’s Get Started activities you’ve set up.



It’s important to say the Bible Point just as it’s written in each activity. Repeating the Bible Point over and over throughout the lesson will help kids remember it and apply it to their lives.



## Let’s Get Started

Set up one or more of the following activities for children to do as they arrive. After you greet each child, invite him or her to choose an activity.

Circulate among the children to offer help as needed and direct children’s conversation toward the point of today’s lesson. Ask questions such as “Have you ever seen a real sheep? Tell me about it” or “What kind of things would you do if you were a shepherd?”

### ■ Option 1: Shepherd’s Corner

**SUPPLIES:** Bible storybook, bathrobes, towels, belts or rope, yardsticks, wool yarn pieces, bread, cheese slices, wet wipes

Set up a shepherd’s corner in one area of your classroom. Set out a children’s Bible or Bible storybook that illustrates what shepherds in Bible times looked like. Bring in yardsticks, bathrobes, towels, and belts or rope for children to use to dress up as shepherds. Show children the pictures, and then help them create their own shepherd costumes. They can tie on the towels as headdresses and use the yardsticks as shepherds’ staffs. Before the lesson begins, you may want to give children wet wipes to clean their hands.

Set out pieces of wool yarn or fabric for children to feel. Provide an unsliced loaf of bread and slices of cheese for children to sample. As children dress up and look at, touch, and taste the items you’ve set out, talk about the life of a shepherd. Explain that shepherds watched sheep all day and often took simple food such as bread and cheese along with them. Point out that ► the shepherds were glad that Jesus is God’s special gift.



The children may need assistance with the bread. To save time, you may want to tear the bread into pieces before class. Cheese should be in slices, not cubes, for this age. If you don’t have bathrobes, bring in adult-sized T-shirts and tie them in the middle with a belt or piece of rope.





## Option 2: Sheep Puppets

**SUPPLIES:** old socks, glue, black marker, newsprint, cotton balls or fiberfill stuffing

Bring in an old sock for each child in your class. Have each child choose a sock to put on his or her hand. Show children how to push the socks between their thumbs and fingers to make puppet mouths. Help children draw eyes on their puppets with a black marker. Then have children take the puppets off their hands and stuff the puppets with newsprint. Have an adult helper put glue on the back of each sock, above the eyes. Let children press fiberfill stuffing or cotton balls onto the glue. As children work on their puppets, explain that today's Bible story is about shepherds who went to find baby Jesus. Point out that ► the shepherds were glad that Jesus is God's special gift.

Write children's names on their puppets, and set them aside to dry. When the glue dries, remove the newsprint stuffing and have children put their puppets on their hands. You'll have an instant flock of little lambs!



If you need help collecting socks, call several parents and ask them to bring in socks that have "lost their mates" or have holes in them.



## Option 3: Modeling-Dough Sheep

**SUPPLIES:** modeling dough

Set out modeling dough, and show children how to make dough balls to represent sheep. Have children help you make a dough fence to represent a sheepfold. Explain that a sheepfold is a safe place where shepherds put their sheep for the night to protect them from animals and robbers. Ask children to help you fill up the sheepfold with as many sheep as they can. Count the sheep together. Tell children that today's story is about the shepherds who were told where to find baby Jesus. Explain that ► the shepherds were glad that Jesus is God's special gift.

When everyone has arrived and you're ready to move on to Bible Story Time, encourage the children to finish what they're doing and get ready to clean up.

## Pick-Up Time

**SUPPLIES:** CD player



Lead children in singing "Come Along With Me" (track 2) with the CD to the tune of "Come and Go With Me." Encourage children to sing along as they help clean up the room.



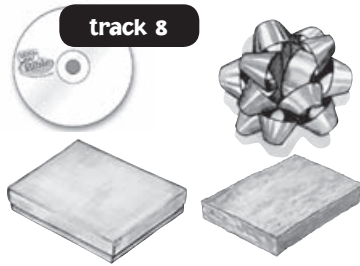
**Come along with me and pick up all our things,  
Pick up all our things,  
Pick up all our things.  
Come along with me and pick up all our things  
So our room will be clean.**

*(Repeat 2x.)*

# Bible Story Time

## ■ Setting the Stage

**SUPPLIES:** yardsticks, blocks or rhythm instruments, CD player



Before class, pull apart the *cotton padding* (which was taken out of the *gift box* in Lesson 1) so the soft side is facing out. Put the *cotton padding* inside the *gift box*. Make sure the *gift bow* is attached to the *gift box*.

Tell children you'll clap three times to get their attention. Explain that when you clap three times, the children are to stop what they're doing and repeat the clap. Practice this signal a few times. Encourage children to respond quickly so you'll have time for all the fun activities you've planned.

Gather the children around you, and ask:

• **What did you make or do when you came to our class today?** (Dressed up like a shepherd; made a sheep puppet; made dough sheep.)

Say: **Some of you dressed up like a shepherd. If you dressed up like a shepherd, stand up and say, "I'm a shepherd," and then sit down.** Pause. **Some of you made sheep puppets. If you made a sheep puppet, raise your hand and say "baa-aa!"** Pause. **Some of you made modeling-dough sheep and counted them. If you made dough sheep, stand up and say, "One, two, three," and then sit down.**

Bring out the *gift box* with the *cotton padding* inside. Hold the box up, and ask:

• **Remember our pretty gift box? What did we have in it for our other lessons?** (A glittery angel; hay.)

Say: **In our other lessons, we had a glittery paper angel to remind us of angels and manger hay to remind us of the manger where Jesus slept. Let's open the box and see what's in it today.**

Ask a child to open the box. Have the child hand you the *cotton padding*. Hold it up, and ask:

• **What could this cotton have to do with our Bible story?** (There were sheep; the shepherds saw Jesus.)

Say: **This cotton reminds me of the sheep that the shepherds were taking care of when the angel came and told them that Jesus was born. That's what our Bible story is about today. ► The shepherds were glad that Jesus is God's special gift. We're going to use this cotton after we've heard our story. Right now we're going to sing a special song to get ready for our story. First we'll listen to it, and then we'll sing it together.**

Set the cotton aside. Lead children in singing "Jesus Christ Is Born" (track 8) with the CD to the tune of "The Farmer in the Dell." The song is recorded on the CD once. Encourage children to sing along with you as you play it a second time.



### SING

**Jesus Christ is born!  
Jesus Christ is born!  
Born today in Bethlehem,  
Jesus Christ is born!**



### ◀ BIBLE POINT

Lying in a manger;  
Lying in a manger;  
Born today in Bethlehem,  
Jesus Christ is born!

Glory to God!  
Glory to God!  
Born today in Bethlehem,  
Jesus Christ is born!

After the children are familiar with the song, pass out the yardsticks you used as shepherds' staffs during Let's Get Started. Give other children blocks or rhythm instruments to use while singing and marching. Play the song again, and have children march around the room pretending to be shepherds as they sing.

After the song, collect the staffs and instruments and have the children sit down.

Ask: • **How do you think the shepherds felt when the angel told them to go find Jesus in the stable?** (Surprised; happy; excited.)

Say: ► ***The shepherds were glad that Jesus is God's special gift. And do you know what? Jesus is our special gift from God, too! Let's get ready to hear about baby Jesus and the shepherds now.***



## ■ Bible Song and Prayer Time

**SUPPLIES:** Bible, CD player



tracks 3, 4

Say: **Now it's time to choose a Bible helper to bring me the Bible marked with today's Bible story. As we sing our Bible song, we'll pass around our special Bible. The person who's holding the Bible when the music stops will be our Bible helper today. Each week one of you will get to be the Bible helper!**

Lead children in singing "I'm So Glad for the Bible" (track 3) with the CD to the tune of "Give Me Oil in My Lamp." As you sing, pass around the special Bible.



**I'm so glad for the Bible.  
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.  
I'm so glad for God's book today.  
I'm so glad for the Bible.  
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'—  
Keep me learnin' all about his way.**

**Let me hear 'bout God's love—  
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.  
Let me hear 'bout God's love for me.  
Let me hear 'bout God's love—  
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.  
Let's shine the light for all to see.**

*(Repeat first verse.)*

When the music stops, invite the child who's holding the Bible to bring it to you.

Stamp the child's hand with the *angel stamp*, and thank him or her for bringing you the Bible. Then stamp the other children's hands. Return the *angel stamp* and *ink pad* to the Learning Lab.

Say: **I'm thankful for [name of child who brought the Bible], and I'm thankful for everyone in our class today. Let's thank God together for all our friends in this class.**

Lead children in singing "I'm So Glad We're Together" (track 4) with the *CD* to the tune of "Give Me Oil in My Lamp."



**I'm so glad we're together.  
Keep us prayin', prayin', prayin'.  
I'm so glad we're all here today.  
I'm so glad we're together.  
Keep us prayin', prayin', prayin'—  
Prayin' for each other every day.**

Lead children in folding their hands and bowing their heads as you continue to sing.

**Thank you, Lord, for each one.  
Keep me thankful, thankful, thankful.  
Thank you for everyone who's here.  
Thank you, Lord, for each one.  
Keep me thankful, thankful, thankful—  
Thankful for our friends both far and near.**

## ■ Hear and Tell the Bible Story

**SUPPLIES:** Bible, fiberfill stuffing



Open the *Learning Mat*, and fold back the panel with the three wise men so that they cannot be seen. Post the folded-back *Learning Mat* on a wall in the story area. Have a bag of fiberfill stuffing on hand.

Open your Bible to **Luke 2**, and show the passage to the children.

Say: **Our Bible story comes from the book of Luke in the Bible.**

**Our Learning Mat shows us pictures of our Bible story.** Point to the picture of the manger that children worked on last week, and ask:

• **Does anyone remember the story we heard last week? Can you tell me what happened in the stable?** (Jesus was born; Mary and Joseph and Jesus stayed there.)

Say: **Just as our Bible verse tells us in Matthew 2:1, ►“Jesus was born in Bethlehem.”** Point to the manger. **You helped glue manger hay onto our Learning Mat manger to make it look real.**

Ask: • **Where are babies usually born today?** (In a hospital; at home; don't know.)

Say: **Today, babies are usually born in the hospital or at home with help from doctors. But God chose for Jesus to be born in a stable. That was a surprise to everyone. God had another surprise for people. Instead of telling kings or queens or important people about Jesus, God sent angels to tell the shepherds first! I want you to pretend you're a shepherd while I tell the story today. I'm going to give you each a clump of this fuzzy fiberfill stuffing.**

This Bible story is featured in *My First Hands-On Bible*. Order several now for your ministry at [group.com](http://group.com).



## ◀ BIBLE VERSE

**I want you to hold it during our story. You can pretend it's your sheep.**

Pass out a clump of stuffing to each child. Say: **I can see that all of you shepherds are ready with your sheep! As I tell the story, I want you to help me. Every time you hear me say the word *sheep* or *shepherd*, I want you to pet your sheep and say "baa." Are you ready? Let's practice.**

Say the words *sheep* and *shepherd*, and then pause for children to say "baa" and pet their pretend sheep.

Then say: **That was very good. Is everyone ready for our story? Let's begin!**

**It was the night that baby Jesus was born. Everything was quiet and dark in the city. People were sleeping. But out in the fields on the edge of town, some shepherds were quietly watching their sheep, just like they did every night.**

Point to the sheep on the *Learning Mat*, and say: **Here are the sheep on our *Learning Mat* picture. Let's count how many there are in our picture.** Count the sheep together.

**Now while the sheep ate and rested, some of the shepherds watched the night sky. It was filled with thousands of dancing stars shimmering down on them. What a beautiful night!**

**Suddenly, a bright and shining angel appeared to the shepherds. The shepherds were very afraid. Can you show me how they looked? Pause. The angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I am bringing you good news that will make everyone happy. Today your Savior was born in Bethlehem. You will find him wrapped in pieces of cloth and lying in a manger!"**

**Then lots of other angels joined the first angel. They sang and praised God. They said, "Glory to God! Peace on earth to those who please God!" Then the angels went back to heaven.**

**Then everything was dark and quiet again. The shepherds said to each other, "Let's go to Bethlehem! Let's see this thing God has told us about." So the shepherds said goodbye to their sheep and hurried to town. They found Mary and Joseph and the baby. The baby was lying in a manger, just like the angel said. The shepherds loved baby Jesus and knew he was the Savior. They knew he was special. So they gave thanks in their hearts to God. ►The shepherds were glad that Jesus is God's special gift.**

**That's the end of our story today. You were good helpers. Now I'd like you to hold your sheep quietly in your laps while we talk about our story for a minute.**

Ask: • **How did the shepherds feel when the angels told them about Jesus being born?** (Excited; happy; first they were scared and then glad.)

• **Did you ever feel important and special when someone told you important news? Tell us about it.** (My friend told me he got a new bike; my mom told me I was going to have a baby brother or sister.)

Say: **We feel proud and happy when people tell us important news. The shepherds didn't know they were special or important, but God thought they were! They got to be the first ones to see Jesus. They felt special! ►The shepherds were glad that Jesus is God's special gift. And Jesus is God's special gift to you and me, too.**



### BIBLE POINT ►



### BIBLE POINT ►



## ■ Do the Bible Story

**SUPPLIES:** fiberfill stuffing, crayons, markers, glue



Have children stand and hold their fiberfill sheep. Say: **We're going to play a game called Follow the Shepherd. I'll start by being the shepherd, and you follow me. Take your sheep with you, and do what I do. Then we'll come back here and decorate our Learning Mat.**

Lead children around the room. Demonstrate the actions listed below for children to imitate as they follow you.

- hopping
- twirling
- sitting down and petting their sheep
- skipping
- raising their sheep up in the air
- saying, "Jesus is God's special gift"
- crawling on hands and knees while saying "baa"

When you've finished the actions, lead children back to your story area. Gently take the *Learning Mat* down from the wall, and set it on the floor or on a table.

Say: **Let's make the sheep and shepherds on our Learning Mat look real by decorating them.**

Pass out crayons and markers, and let the children color the scene with the shepherds. Then let them take turns gluing some of their fiberfill onto the sheep in the picture. If you have more children than sheep, have two or three children work on one sheep together. Or add extra sheep by gluing some of the fiberfill onto the *Learning Mat* around the sheep that are shown on the mat. As children work, remind them that **▶ the shepherds were glad that Jesus is God's special gift.**

When children have finished decorating the shepherds and sheep, give each child a *star sticker* to place in the sky.



If your class is large, you could divide the class into two or three groups. Have one group decorate the mat while the others play Follow the Shepherd. Let groups switch activities every few minutes.

If more than one class uses the *Learning Mat* on your lesson day, color only a portion of it and explain that other children will finish the sheep and shepherd picture later. More sheep and stars can be added as necessary.



Say: **The shepherds stopped everything they were doing that night in order to visit baby Jesus. Let's stop what we're doing right now to visit with Jesus and tell him how much we love him. Jesus will always take time to listen when we come to him.**

Ask the children if any would like to pray aloud, offering love to Jesus. If not, go ahead and pray: **Dear Jesus, just as the shepherds came to see you and show their love, we come to you right now to let you know how much we love you. We're so glad that you are God's special gift. Amen.**

Say: **Wow! Our Learning Mat looks so special. I wonder if our friend Whiskers would like to see it. Maybe we could tell him about the shepherds who saw baby Jesus.**

## Closing

### ■ Woolly Whiskers

**SUPPLIES:** fiberfill stuffing, tape



Before class, tape fiberfill stuffing all over Whiskers. He should look like a mouse in sheep's clothing! Bring out Whiskers, and go through the following puppet script. When you finish the script, put Whiskers away and out of sight.



**Whiskers:** Hi, everybody!

**Teacher:** *(Smiling)* Why, Whiskers, you look different today!

**Whiskers:** Do you like it? I saw you playing Follow the Shepherd. I love games, and I love sheep. So I wanted to dress up like one!

**Teacher:** Well, you certainly do look woolly! You'd blend right into our Learning Mat. Children, let's show Whiskers the Learning Mat picture we decorated today.

*(Invite two or three children to help you hold up the Learning Mat.)*

**Whiskers:** *(To the children)* Wow! You made this? *(Points to sheep on mat.)* Look, a whole flock of sheep! *(Claps hands.)* Oh, this is so much fun!

**Teacher:** Whiskers, you said you saw us playing the game. Did you hear our Bible story about the shepherds?

**Whiskers:** No, I didn't hear a story. But you know I love Bible stories! Tell me, tell me!

**Teacher:** Let's ask your friends if they can tell you what happened to the shepherds in our Bible story today.

*(Help children tell Whiskers how an angel appeared and told the shepherds that Jesus had been born. Explain how the shepherds hurried to Bethlehem and found baby Jesus, just like the angel said.)*

**Whiskers:** Boy, that's a good story. The shepherds must have felt important. They got to see baby Jesus first!

**Teacher:** Yes, Whiskers, ▶ the shepherds were glad that Jesus is God's special gift.

**Whiskers:** Hmm...*(Gets quiet.)*

**Teacher:** What are you thinking, Whiskers?

**Whiskers:** Well, the shepherds were lucky. God thought they were important. I wish I were one of them. Sometimes I don't feel very important.

**Teacher:** Whiskers, the shepherds probably didn't feel very important, either. But they were important to God. We're all important to God—even the littlest and the quietest people in our class are important.

**Whiskers:** Well, that's me! *(Looking around at everyone)* I'm the littlest! You're all bigger than I am.

**Teacher:** But you're important, Whiskers. Remember the shepherds!

**Whiskers:** (*Brightens.*) Yes, I'll remember the shepherds. Boy, thanks for telling me! I'm glad that Jesus is God's special gift, too. Hey, everybody, you wanna be sheep together and make sheep praises to God? Baa! Baa-aa!

(*Have children join in with Whiskers.*)

**Whiskers:** This was fun! I learned a lot today. 'Bye, everybody! See you next week!

Permission to photocopy this script from Group's Hands-On Bible Curriculum®, Preschool, granted for local church use. Copyright © Group Publishing, Inc., 1515 Cascade Avenue, Loveland, CO 80538. group.com



## ■ Five Happy Shepherds

**SUPPLIES:** washable markers

Help children use washable markers to draw two eyes and a smiling mouth on each finger on one hand. Say: **Everyone hold up all five fingers. We're going to learn a fun finger play about the shepherds now.**

Lead children in the following finger play. Repeat the rhyme several times so children can learn the words and finger motions.

**Five good shepherds watching their sheep.** (*Hold up five fingers.*)

**One saw the angel, and up he leaped.** (*Put other fingers down, and hold up only one finger, starting with the thumb.*)

**"Come," said the angel, "the Savior is here."** (*Beckon with other hand.*)

**Away went the shepherd, without any fear.** (*Move hand behind back with thumb still up.*)

Repeat the rhyme, holding up four, three, two, and then one finger. Finish with this verse:

**Five good shepherds standing in a row.** (*Hold up all five fingers.*)

**They all found Jesus and bowed down low.** (*Fold fingers down, making a fist.*)

**"We love you, Lord Jesus, we love you, we do."** (*Wiggle fingers excitedly.*)

**"We'll tell our families and other people, too!"**

Ask: • **How did the shepherds feel when they were told about Jesus being born?** (Happy; excited; important.)

Say: ► ***The shepherds were glad that Jesus is God's special gift. Let's fold up our shepherd fingers and thank God for sending Jesus. Thank you, Lord, for giving us the most special gift of all—your Son, Jesus. Amen.***



### Growing closer to Jesus extends beyond the classroom.

Photocopy the "Today I Learned..." handout (at the end of this lesson) for this week, and send it home with the children. Encourage parents to use the handout to plan meaningful family activities to reinforce this week's topic.





## For Extra Time

If you have a long class time or want to add additional elements to your lesson, try one of the following activities.

### ■ Lively Learning: Angel Calling

Have everyone be shepherds and lie on the floor pretending to be asleep. Choose one child to be the angel. When the angel says, “Jesus is born,” the shepherds are to jump up and follow the angel around the room. When the angel lies down on the floor, everyone else is to lie down, too. Repeat the game, and choose a new angel each time. As children play the game, remind them that ► the shepherds were glad that Jesus is God’s special gift.

### ■ Make to Take: Thumb-Print Sheep



Give each child a sheet of green construction paper. Show children how to make thumb-print sheep bodies using the *ink pad* in the Learning Lab. Demonstrate how to add a print from a smaller fingertip for the sheep’s head. Let children make as many sheep as they want. If they’re interested, let them add legs and faces with fine-tipped markers. As children work, review how the shepherds left their sheep to go see baby Jesus. Remind children that ► the shepherds were glad that Jesus is God’s special gift.

### ■ Treat to Eat: Fuzzy Sheep

Combine one 8-ounce package of cream cheese, ½ cup of nonfat dry milk, and 1 tablespoon of honey. Stir to make a dough-like mixture. Add more powdered milk as needed to keep it from being too pasty. If you have more than 10 children in your class, you may need to make additional batches of dough.

Give each child a spoonful of the mixture on a small paper plate, along with a spoonful of coconut or powdered sugar and some candies. Show each child how to roll the dough into a ball and then roll it in coconut or powdered sugar. Have the children add the candies for eyes; then tell them to eat their fuzzy sheep!

Be sure to have wet paper towels on hand for cleaning sticky fingers. Unused portions must be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator.



### ■ Story Picture: Angels Tell Shepherds Jesus Is Born

Give each child a copy of the “Today I Learned...” handout. Set out crayons or markers, and have children color their pictures. Then set out craft sticks and glue, and help each child glue a craft stick to the shepherd’s staff in the picture. As children work, review how the shepherds hurried to see baby Jesus. Remind children that ► the shepherds were glad that Jesus is God’s special gift.

# Today I learned... The shepherds were glad that Jesus is God's special gift.

Help me learn this:

"Jesus was born in Bethlehem"  
(Matthew 2:1a).

Ask me:

- How did the shepherds feel when the angel told them that Jesus was born?
- Tell me about a time you felt special and important.
- What can our family do this week to thank God for sending Jesus?

## Family Fun

- Do this finger play with your child. Ask your child to help you with the motions. Start with one less finger each time.

**Five good shepherds watching their sheep.** (Hold up five fingers.)

**One saw the angel, and up he leaped.** (Put fingers down, and hold up thumb.)

**"Come," said the angel, "the Savior is here."** (Beckon with other hand.)

**Away went the shepherd, without any fear.** (Move hand behind back with thumb still up.)

**Lesson 3**  
Today your child learned that **THE SHEPHERDS WERE GLAD THAT JESUS IS GOD'S SPECIAL GIFT.** Children heard how an angel told the shepherds that Jesus was born. They learned a finger play about the shepherds' story and thanked God for sending Jesus.



**Angels Tell  
Shepherds  
Jesus Is  
Born**  
(Luke 2:8-15)