



A Child Will Be Born

Goal: To wait and prepare for the Prince of Peace.

RECOGNIZING GOD'S GRACE . . .

. . . In Isaiah 9:2-7

A beautiful and blessed promise revealed to Isaiah is that “a child is born to us, / a son is given to us, / and authority will be on his shoulders. / He will be named / Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, / Eternal Father, Prince of Peace” (v. 6, CEB). This is a promise full of hope to the people of Israel, exiled in Babylon. A child of messianic hope will come; One given by God to fulfill a promise of “establishing and sustaining” the kingdom of David; One who exercises “vast authority” and brings “endless peace,” ruling with “justice and righteousness / now and forever” (v. 7).

God's promise of a coming child shows us most wonderfully that God will send a person to reign in Israel in a way greatly superior to all others who have ruled in the nation. The names for this coming One convey the greatness of this One who brings peace, and rules in the way of God, with “justice and righteousness.” This One will reign forever!

God will help the helpless people by grace. Their gratitude will know no bounds or ending! Now we have received this child of Messianic hope: Jesus Christ! We are grateful, forever!

. . . In Your Children's Experiences

Invite the children in your group who have younger brothers or sisters to tell about when they were born, what they were expecting, and how it turned out. Be prepared for funny stories. Someone in your group might also be waiting for a new sister or brother to be adopted or born into their family. This will be a nice way to begin the story from the prophet Isaiah about the promise God made of a child. The children can compare the words they used to describe their sibling with the words used here, which we use to describe the birth of Jesus, the Messiah.

. . . In Your Relationships with the Children

Children at this age are very literal and concrete thinkers. The concepts of light and dark introduced in this Isaiah passage may be interpreted as such—that people were on a journey walking in darkness, at night, with no light. Help them understand the metaphors of dark and light. Explore what times of darkness may feel like and what light feels like. Be sensitive to those who express feelings of sadness or loneliness, troubles in their lives or community. Remind the children of the hope found in the light of Jesus in the world.

*God, help me radiate your goodness and love for all to see.
In Jesus' name. Amen.*



Supplies

Music & Melodies

bit.ly/GGGMusicMelodies

Stories, Colors & More (SCM) i-iv, 1, 1a, 2, 3, 4, 14

basic supplies
(see p. vii)

internet-connected
device

blanket or mats

four 9" x 12" envelopes

snack

Guided Play

choice 1: baby dolls,
blankets, bottles

choice 2: small bell

choice 3: child-friendly
nativity set

Exploring

choice 1: copies of **Grace
Notes (GN) 1**

choice 2: copies of **GN 2**

choice 3: Christmas
music and music player

choice 4: copies of **GN 3**

Make a few extra queen
and king paper-plate
puppets in case some
children have time to
make only one or don't
want to make any.

GATHERING IN GOD'S GRACE

Before the Children Arrive

Designate a story corner, and lay out a blanket or individual mats for the children so their backs will be to the door.

Use **SCM i-ii**, "Your Visual Schedule," to provide clear expectations and a visual cue for the group.

See **SCM iii-iv** for the key to icons (for example, **LG** **T**) and ways to adapt for children who have special needs or disabilities.

Select the activities that will work best for you and for your children. You do not need to do everything suggested!

Gather four 9" x 12" envelopes and glue the front side to a sheet of poster board. Cut out the numbers from **SCM 1a**. Glue a number to each envelope. Place the story **SCM 1** in the first envelope. Place the story **SCM 2** in envelope 2. Place the story **SCM 3** in envelope 3 and the story **SCM 4** in envelope 4. You will use this Advent calendar poster for the four Sundays of Advent.

Welcoming and Guided Play



Greet children as they arrive and say, "Grace and peace be with you." Prompt them to respond, "And also with you." Be sensitive to any children who might be coming for the first time. Introduce yourself to parents/caregivers that you do not know personally. Tell the parents, today's story is about Isaiah's message to the people of God about a child who will be born and bring peace to the world.

Invite the children to choose a guided-play activity to start:

- 1. Caring for Babies**—Place baby dolls, blankets, and bottles on a table. Invite the children to care for the babies. While you play with the children, pantomime actions for ways to care for babies, such as feeding, laying the baby down to sleep, holding the baby, changing a diaper, or giving the baby a bath. Invite them to tell you about taking care of a baby.
- 2. Acknowledging Kindness**—Invite the children to play with blocks or toys. Encourage kindness among the children. Acknowledge and praise the kindness you see by ringing a bell and saying the child's name. Children will want to be seen and acknowledged, and will begin to do acts of kindness.
- 3. Playing with a Nativity Set**—Invite children to play with the characters and animals of a nativity set.

T *Transition times can be more frustrating to children if they have to wait. Be prepared to move to the next activity and alert children of upcoming changes. If children will need to wait, provide a simple task such as hand clapping to occupy the time and lessen the frustration.*



Transitioning to Story Time

When the children are ready to move into group time, call them to the story corner.

Where Is . . .



Say or sing the following song to the tune of “Are You Sleeping” (also known as “*Frere Jacques*”). Invite the children to stand and respond, “Here I am!” when they hear their name called.

Where is (*Name*)? Where is (*Name*)?

Here I am! Here I am! (*stand*)

Wave to everybody. Wave to everybody.

Have a seat. Have a seat.

Where Is Isaiah?



Say or sing the following song to the tune of “Are You Sleeping” (also known as “*Frere Jacques*”). Invite the children to echo with the bolded lines.

Where’s Isaiah? **Where’s Isaiah?**

In the Bible! **In the Bible!**

Let us hear his story. **Let us hear his story.**

Tell us more! **Tell us more!**

Hearing the Story



Play “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”—**SCM 14**. Teach the words to the children. Sing the song as an opening to story time.

Open the Bible to Isaiah 9 so the children know the story comes from the Bible. Tell the children that they are going to hear a story about the prophet Isaiah. Explain that a *prophet* is a messenger of God. Isaiah’s message is about a baby who will be born to bring peace to the world.

Draw the children’s attention to the Advent calendar you prepared with the envelopes. Tell them that today is the First Sunday of Advent, a time when we look forward to the coming of the baby, Jesus. Tell the children that there are four weeks in Advent, and each week we will open an envelope and hear a story about Jesus.

Open envelope 1, and take out the story. Read **SCM 1**. Express the emotions of the story in your voice, gestures, and facial expressions. Conclude the story by prompting the children to say, “Amen.”

After you have read the story, invite the children to repeat your words and actions.





The people were sad. (*make a sad face*) /
Boo-hoo! /
Who will come? (*shrug shoulders and place palms up
questioningly*) /
A baby! (*pretend to rock a baby*) /
Who is this child? (*shrug shoulders and place palms up
questioningly*) /
Jesus! (*raise hand in the air*) /
What will he bring? (*shrug shoulders and place palms up
questioningly*) /
Peace. (*relax shoulders and exhale, “ahhh”*) /
The message gave the people hope. (*hands outstretched,
palms up*) /
Woo-hoo! (*clap*) /
Amen! /

EXPLORING GOD'S GRACE

1. Waiting for Jesus



Hand out copies of GN 1. Tell the children that the baby the people are waiting for is Jesus. Invite them to color the hay yellow. Invite them to color the picture of the baby Jesus and the label.

Help the children cut out the pieces. Ask them to glue the baby to the manger.

Tell the children that the label says, “Waiting for the Prince of Peace.” Tell the children that the baby Jesus is the Prince of Peace that the people were waiting for!

Have the children glue the label to the outside of a paper lunch bag. Tell them to put the baby Jesus in the manger in the bag. Encourage the children to take the bag home and wait until Christmas morning to open the bag and find Jesus, the Prince of Peace.

2. Sharing the Message



Hand out copies of GN 2. Read what is written in the speech bubble, “The Prince of Peace is coming!” Invite the children to color and decorate the messages using items such as glitter, stickers, plastic gems, or foam shapes. Help the children cut out messages.

Remind the children that Isaiah shared the message with God’s people that the Prince of Peace would come.

When they have finished, invite the children to follow you and place the messages around the church to share Isaiah’s message.

Tell the children that they are messengers like Isaiah!



3. Wait, Wait, Wait . . .

MS L D

Tell the children that you will say, “Wait, wait, wait . . .” and they should remain perfectly still.

Explain then you will say, “Get ready to . . . CELEBRATE!” When they hear the word “Celebrate,” they can move and wiggle and dance around to joyful Christmas music.

Say, “Wait, wait, wait . . .,” the children should remain still, until you say, “Get ready to . . . CELEBRATE!”

Repeat this several times, varying the length of time between the waiting and the celebrating.

Add a question after “Celebrate,” saying, “Who are we waiting for?” and invite the children to respond, “Jesus,” “the Prince of Peace,” or “a baby.”

Use “wonder” questions that do not force a child to remember facts. Wondering questions help a child think aloud. Answers are neither right nor wrong. They help teach children to speak from their hearts.

4. Coloring Page

C FM

Hand out copies of **GN 3** and crayons. Invite the children to color the picture of Isaiah’s message. Engage the children in conversation as they color by using the following wondering questions.

- ▼ I wonder, “Who is the baby?”
- ▼ I wonder, “What did the people hope for?”
- ▼ I wonder, “What do you think we can do while we are waiting for the baby Jesus?”

T *Transitions can be difficult. This may be a good time for some quick physical activities, such as reaching up to the sky and bending down to touch toes, clapping hands, and so forth.*

Keep the Advent calendar poster for the next four sessions.

LOVING AND SERVING GOD

FA

Call the children together, singing “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”—**SCM 14**. Explain that during Advent, we are waiting for Jesus, the Son of God to be born.

If you would like to share a snack, now would be a good time. Pray:

God, we give our thanks:
for food that fills our tummies,
for time with friends and family,
for homes where we find love.
We give our thanks for these.
Amen.



Ages 3-5

A Child Will Be Born

Year 2, Winter 1

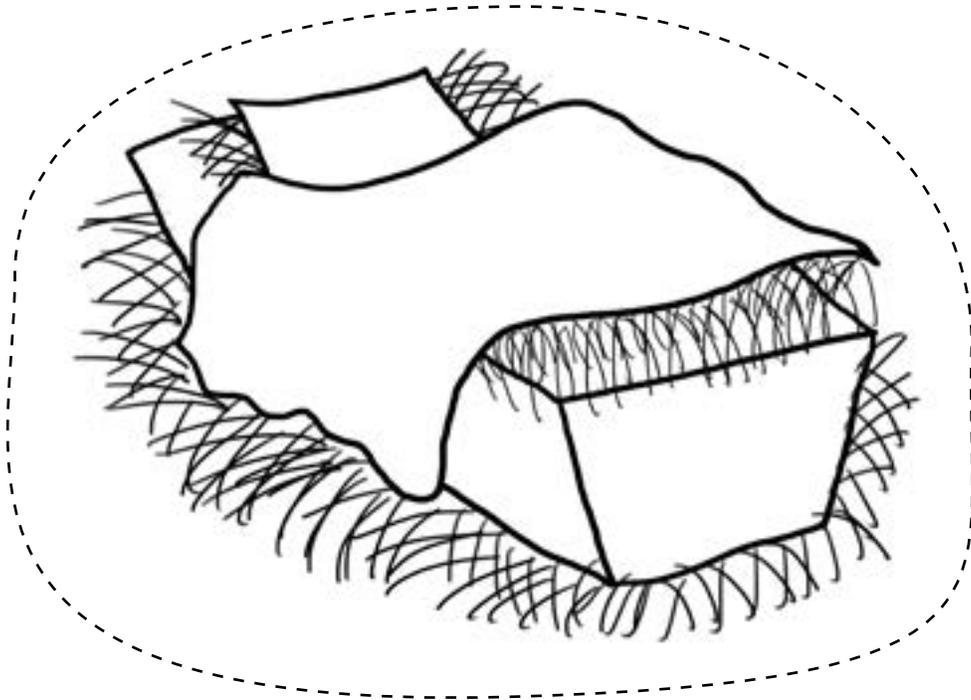


Ask parents and caregivers for their email addresses so that you can provide them with the link to www.pcusastore.com/GGGdownloads, where they can download coloring pages, *Grace Sightings*, audio stories, and songs (see p. vii).

Remind the children that Isaiah had a message of hope for the people of God. He told them about a baby who would be the Prince of Peace. They had to wait, but the Prince of Peace would bring kindness to the world. Ask the children what they will do while they wait this week.

As the children leave, bless them: “(Name), God’s peace is with you. Go and share God’s peace with other people.”

Waiting for the Prince of Peace



The
Prince of Peace
is coming!

The
Prince of Peace
is coming!

A Child Will Be Born



Isaiah tells the people that the Prince of Peace will come someday.

