



# The Anticipated Event



## THE MISSION AIM

God fulfills His promise and His Son is born!



## KEY VERSE

Isaiah 7:14: "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."



## Pre-Mission Activity



## Supplies Needed

- Cupcakes for putting icing on (one for each recruit) for Field Mission Project
- Card making supplies: paper, markers, stickers, pencils, paper for cutting, Christmas cards from previous years, scissors. You may want to go online and look up pop up Christmas cards for some ideas of how to bring some new ideas to the group (<http://barnaclebill.hubpages.com/hub/popupchristmascards>, <http://www.instructables.com/id/How-to-make-POP-UP-Card-for-Christmas---Angel-POP-/>, <https://www.pinterest.ca/pin/156359418290953812/>)



Squad leader please be aware of any food allergies your recruits may have.

## Directions

**DO:** Have kids get started either icing cupcakes (for Field Mission Project) or creating Christmas cards (totally open ended) to give away. You can encourage them to use a variety of techniques of drawing, stickers, pop ups. As they work ask questions such as the ones below.

**SAY:** Did anyone have any surprises this week? Who did you decide to give your ornament to? How did that go? What are you most looking forward to this week and why?



## Mission Uplink 1



Have ready YouTube playlist: "Season 2 – The Christmas Promise Episode 3: The Anticipated Event"

Play "The Christmas Promise (S2) Episode 3 (1/4)". Episode begins with the *Ready to Serve* theme song, followed automatically by the MISSION # 1 VIDEO. Pause the video when the MISSION # 1 CARD appears on screen and remains as you and your recruits complete Mission # 1.

If using PPT for video, have Christmas-Episode\_3-The\_Anticipated\_Event.pptx ready and play slide one. Pause on the MISSION # 1 CARD so you and your recruits can complete Mission # 1.



## Mission #1



### Supplies Needed

- A two kg bag of flour/sugar wrapped in a blanket to look somewhat like a baby (if you can't find one that big a one kg bag is fine)
- Person dressed as a Jew to share the story on the journey; if possible, give them the section ahead of time to memorize
- Think about where you might be able to walk as you share the journey of Mary and Joseph (maybe throughout your building, outside, in a circle around your room)



### Mission Assignment

**SAY:** I've always loved the Christmas story and to zero in on Mary and Joseph today is such a treat. I'm looking forward to this. Let's have a drum roll for mission #1... (Reading mission card from satellite uplink) "Begin your journey to Bethlehem today and find out why Mary and Joseph were heading to Bethlehem in the first place."

**SAY:** Wow! I like the idea of a journey. How fun!

**DO:** Take the recruits on a walk either throughout the building, outside, or in a circle as they learn more about the mission of Mary and Joseph. If possible, have a visitor or another leader come in dressed as a Jew of the past to take you on your journey. If there is no one who can come, dress up yourself and tell the recruits that you'd like to take them on a journey to Bethlehem. Try to walk them through the building or even neighbourhood if you can. If not, journey in a circle around your room as you tell your story.

**SAY (Jewish friend):** I am so excited to journey with you today as we share the story of Mary and Joseph. The same Mary and Joseph who were to raise the child Jesus. This was to be the baby of whom we're told about in Isaiah 7:14 (NIV). "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." Incredible! Today we will travel the road that Mary and Joseph took to Bethlehem so many years ago. Their story is so incredible and yet, I don't think we think too much about it most of the time. Mary was basically nine months pregnant and the distance was far. As we travel we're going to carry this baby around and maybe it will give us a small taste of how challenging the trip might have been with no car, no van, no wagon, and no trailer.

**DO:** Have different recruits carry the flour/sugar wrapped in a blanket throughout the walk pretending that it's a baby. Continue your walk and talk as you journey.

**SAY:** In those days, Caesar, the Roman Emperor, sent a message out to everyone that they needed to head back to where they had originally come from to be counted in a census and then pay money to the government there. So, Mary and Joseph had to travel from Nazareth to Bethlehem. It would have been about 128 km. Today, in a car on the highway, that might take us about an hour and a half. But, they didn't have a car and they might have even gone a longer route to avoid some of the more dangerous parts of the road. Not only that, but consider the fact that they were walking with a very pregnant lady! The journey could have taken at least a week! Walking or riding a donkey for a week? Not fun! This kind of trip would have been one that was easy to give up on. Speaking of hard, who has the baby now?



**DO:** Begin heading back to your meeting area.

**SAY:** The journey was so difficult, it is really hard to imagine, but that was the way God had planned it. You see, hundreds of years before Jesus was born Micah had prophesied or said that Jesus would be born in Bethlehem. Can you imagine if Mary and Joseph had decided that the journey was too hard, too tiring, or too far? Then Jesus would have been born in the wrong place, the prophecy would not have come true and who knows what might have happened? I'm sure that they were not anticipating that they would have to travel to Bethlehem so close to Jesus being born. And yet, they went. They obeyed Caesar but really, it was all part of God's plan wasn't it? Caesar was totally being used by God to fulfill his plan.

**DO:** Gather the recruits back to their meeting area.

**SAY:** How do you think you would have felt if you were Mary and Joseph? Would you have travelled so far in such difficulty? Hmmm! Makes you think doesn't it? I'm not sure I would have been up for the challenge. Speaking of challenge, we should get back to the Recon Team. Let's hope that Nicholas doesn't give up on his project just because someone doesn't like it. He's been working too hard on it to leave it now.



### Mission Uplink 2



**YouTube:** Play "The Christmas Promise (S2) Episode 3 (2/4)". Pause the video when the MISSION # 2 CARD appears on screen and remains as you and your recruits complete Mission # 2.

**PPT:** Click to advance to next slide. Pause video when MISSION #2 CARD appears on screen and remains as you and your recruits complete Mission # 2.



### Mission #2



#### Supplies Needed

- Masking tape to create a small square on the floor for all the recruits to tightly fit into (or create several smaller squares)
- Nativity scene on display with Mary, Joseph, Jesus, manger, shepherds
- Something scratchy for the kids to feel i.e. clump of hay, sandpaper, real wool, corn stalk, end of a clean broom etc.
- Someone dressed as a shepherd with the script memorized if possible
- The words to the first verse of "Joy to the World" (Salvation Army Song Book #84 or you can find it online)





## Mission Assignment

**SAY:** We often don't focus on what Jesus' birth must have really been like. But we're getting a better picture of it today. Let's hear it for mission # 2. Drum roll please... (Reading mission card from satellite uplink) "Take some time to find out what it must have really been like to be in Bethlehem when Jesus was born."

**DO:** Get the recruits to all try to stand in a square made from masking tape. As they squeeze in have them call out, NO ROOM! NO ROOM!

**SAY:** Okay, come on out of your box and sit down here. Imagine it, here were Mary and Joseph. They arrived in Bethlehem absolutely exhausted, ready to have a baby and they couldn't find any room to sleep, no bed, and no place to stay. Then a man says, "Well, I don't have room inside but you can stay in the stable out back." We've heard that part of the story so often, haven't we? There was no room for them in the inn. But seriously, think about it. He told them they could go and sleep in the stable. The stable! What would that sound like...chickens, cows, cats, horses? Pick a farm animal. Think of what sound they'd make. On three, we're going to make the sounds of the barn BUT watch my fingers because when my fingers get to zero, this room needs to be silent again.

**DO:** Give the recruits a moment to create the sounds of the barn while using your fingers to count down to zero.

**SAY:** Imagine how loud it would be in there. Now, think of the smells. You know what I mean – cows, sheep, chickens, horses! So, here they were with no room for them at the inn but a stinky, musty stable ready for them after their exhausting journey. Yuck!

**SAY:** So there we have it. Jesus was going to be born there, in the stable! The smelly, dirty stable. I certainly agree with Kate and what she was thinking when she said that it all kind of looks like the NO plan.

**DO:** Point out the nativity scene displayed in the room.

**SAY:** Let's move on in the story. Who can tell me what a manger is? I know we talk about it all the time at Christmas but what is it?

**DO:** Give recruits a chance to answer (a feeding trough, where the animals eat their food).

**SAY:** So once Jesus was born, he was placed in the feeding trough. How crazy is that? Jesus, the King of the world slept where the animal food was kept. Feel this scratchy \_\_\_\_\_ (item that you have brought). Not only was Jesus laid in the feeding trough but he was likely lying in the hay, not the most comfortable place to lie down. Can you imagine?

**DO:** Let each of the recruits feel the scratchy item and as they continue feeling it have a Shepherd run into the room.

**SAY** (Shepherd- with enthusiasm): Oh my goodness! I can't believe it. I know it's the middle of the night and we're probably a little tired and loopy but we shepherds just had the most amazing thing happen to us. There we were minding our own business when all of a sudden





we heard the fluttering of wings and an angel was there, right in among the sheep. He said, "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." (Luke 2:10-12 NIV) Amazing! But you won't believe what happened next. There was this massive noise like the fluttering of hundreds of wings and then there was singing, amazing melodious singing and a whole group of angels were there saying "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests." (Luke 2:14). It was so joyous!

**SAY:** That must have been wonderful. It makes me want to start singing too. Let's take a minute and sing the first verse of "Joy to the World".

**DO:** Lead the recruits in singing "Joy to the World".

**SAY (Shepherd):** You sounded just like the angels. Beautiful! I have to say that I was totally shocked that they had come to tell us that Jesus was born. No one really likes us, we're just the stinky shepherds who take care of the sheep. Most people stay away from us. But, that's another story. Anyway, as soon as the angels left, we went to find the baby. We literally ran! We were so excited we couldn't contain ourselves. Then we got there. We found him, the King of the world, lying so peacefully in the manger. I couldn't do anything but fall on my knees and worship him. Me, a smelly shepherd in a smelly stable kneeling at the feet of Jesus who was fast asleep in the feeding trough. How odd and yet how beautiful it was! I hope you realize how crazy this story really is and yet, how perfect. The King of the world wouldn't have wanted to be born in a palace with all the rich people oing and awing over him, he came for all of us and he wanted us, smelly, dirty shepherds to know that!

**SAY:** Wow! What a time that must have been! I wish I had been there. Even though it didn't appear to make sense I think Simon had it right when he said there is a God reason for things to happen the way that they do. Speaking of Simon, we should go and see what he and the team are up to.



### Mission Uplink 3



YouTube: Play "The Christmas Promise (S2) Episode 3 (3/4)". Pause the video when the FIELD MISSION CARD appears on screen and remains as you and your recruits complete the Field Mission Project.

PPT: Click to advance to next slide. Pause video when FIELD MISSION CARD appears on screen and remains as you and your recruits complete the Field Mission Project.





## Field Mission Project



### Supplies Needed

- Very small gift bags for each recruit
- Scripture verse template cut into separate verses; gift ideas cut up as well (supplies for each in separate corners of the room) (See attachment page 9)
- Blank slips of paper, pencils, crayons for creating ideas for songs and gifts (supplies for each in different corners of the room)
- List of song titles that you have sung and some Christmas carols posted at the station for writing down a song to sing

### Mission Project

**SAY:** What a beautiful way to end. The story of Jesus birth, saying Happy Birthday to Jesus! Now for our final mission, drum roll please. (Reading mission card from satellite uplink) "Take time today and this week to celebrate Jesus!"

**SAY:** The wonderful thing about Christmas is that it doesn't have to end on Christmas day. Today we are going to create gift bags full of ways to celebrate over the next days and weeks. These can be our gifts to Jesus. Over in one corner of the room are sheets of paper with different Bible verses that you can choose to put in your gift bag to read and memorize. Choose one or two verses. In another corner are some strips of paper to write the title of a song that you can sing together at home. Check out the list on the wall for some songs that you might know. In another corner are some ideas of gifts that you can make for your family and friends and then finally, in the other corner are some blank pieces of paper where you can write or draw a picture to show one thing you can do for Jesus this season. For example, you could write Him a song or poem, pray every day and so on. Please go to each corner and find or create a slip of paper to put in your bag. When you are done, you will have four different slips of paper for your gift bags. When your bag is filled, come and join us at the meeting space.

**DO:** Make sure there are some leaders/helpers who can give suggestions in the corners where they need to write. Here are some other ideas for them: create a prayer, write a poem or song, save money to sponsor a child, give a card to someone you know needs some encouragement, draw a picture for a friend, take your parents to visit someone from church who can't get out.

**SAY:** Now that you have your gift bags filled, take them home as a reminder of what you can do to celebrate Christmas this year.





## Prayer Huddle



Press play/green arrow in the bottom corner to advance to the next slide and the PRAYER HUDDLE CARD will appear and remain on the screen as you and the recruits complete the prayer huddle.

## Supplies Needed

- A yellow, red, blue and green candy for each recruit (small enough to fit on their cupcakes - M and Ms would be perfect); napkins for each recruit
- Cupcakes with icing on them
- A candle that can be lit for the singing of "Happy Birthday"



Squad leader please be aware of any food allergies your recruits may have.

## Directions

**SAY:** Before we head out today I'd like us to spend some time in prayer. Jesus has done so much for us and we have so much that we can give to him. There are so many gifts that he would like from us. We're going to give you four candies and a napkin. Please don't eat the candies right now. Take the yellow candy and put it near you on the napkin. Yellow is such a happy colour. We have been given so much that we need to be thankful and praise God. In the quiet right now, say a prayer and tell God why you love Him and what you are thankful for.

**DO:** Give the recruits a moment to pray.

**SAY:** Now, take the red candy and place it close to you on your napkin. Red is the colour of love and of Jesus' blood shed on the cross. Let this candy be a reminder of the love God showed us in the gift of Jesus that allows you to be forgiven. What a gift! As you pray now, ask God to forgive you for the choices you've made that you know are not making him happy. Name your sins and ask Jesus to forgive you.

**DO:** Give the recruits a moment to be silent and pray.

**SAY:** Let's take out our blue candies. Blue often represents sadness and pain. I know that there are things that are hard for all of us. As you pray now give God the gift of your heart by asking him to help you with those things that make you sad or that hurt you. Ask that he will give you the strength that you need to deal with your hurts and to heal you.

**DO:** Give the recruits time to pray and also pray over them.

**SAY:** Last but not least is our green candy. God has given us so many people in our lives to help us grow. What better colour to represent growing than green? One way we grow in our friendship with God is by praying for other people. There are family, friends and others all around us who are hurting and who need our prayers. God would love for you to give him the gift of your prayers for others whether they live in a country across the world, beside you or in your house. Take the time now to pray for others.

**DO:** Give the recruits a few moments to pray and then pray aloud for them.

**SAY:** God loves it when you give him the gift of your prayers. And now, the moment we've been waiting for: the chance to sing "Happy birthday" to Jesus.

**DO:** Give each recruit a cupcake.



**SAY:** If you want, use your candies to decorate the top of your cupcake and now let's light a candle here and sing "Happy Birthday Jesus".

**DO:** Encourage the recruits to sing their hearts out.

**SAY:** What a wonderful time of celebration. It was not an easy journey for Mary and Joseph and yet when Jesus came, He came for all of us! And now a reminder:

Isaiah 7:14. 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.

**SAY:** Merry Christmas, remember Immanuel, God is with you.

### NOTES:





## **Bible Passages from the NIV to create paper strips**

**Isaiah 7:14:** 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.

**Isaiah 9:6:** For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders, and he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

**Philippians 2:8-10:** And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death – even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

**Luke 2:10-11:** 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.

**Luke 2:14:** “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.”

**John 3:16:** For God so loved the world, that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

**James 1:17:** Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights who does not change like shifting shadows.

## **Gift Ideas**

Make breakfast for your family.

Create and write a card for someone.

Write a poem and present it to your family.

Bake cookies.

Retell the story of Christmas or even act it out for someone.

Read a story to a young child or to an elderly person.

Use recycled items to create a gift.

Make a coupon book of things that you could do for various family members.