

# Together @ Home

Lectionary Edition  
Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> December  
Fourth Sunday of Advent



Here are some activities you could do together as a family. Begin with the story and then do as many or as few as you like, in any order.

## Bible Passage

Today we will be exploring together the story of Joseph's dream.

You can find it in your Bible in:

**Matthew 1:18-25**

Read the story together – choose a Bible translation or children's story version which best suits your group.

**The other passages we might be thinking about at church this week are:**

**Isaiah 7:10-16**

**Luke 1:26-38**

**Luke 1:46-55**

## A prayer to say together

Dear God,  
Thank you for the story of Joseph, like Mary (Jesus' mother), was willing to serve you. Help us to be obedient and servant-hearted too, listening to your instructions and living for you.

We pray for parents all around the world who are expecting babies who or have newborns in these strange times. May they experience the love and support they need around them.

We lift up our own families to you and those who care for us, too and pray that you would bless them this Christmas time, too.

Amen.

## Discussion

A question for adults to ask children

*How do you think Joseph felt when the angel told him in his dream that Mary was going to have such a special baby?*

*How did Joseph respond?*

Though our Bible doesn't tell us how Joseph felt about what the angel in his dream told him, we can imagine the news might have seemed very strange, or maybe even a little scary. How would you feel if an angel appeared to you in a dream and told you to do something?!

What we do know, however, is that Joseph believed the angel. For he responded by taking Mary as his wife, just as he was told to do.

A question for children to ask adults

*What is the best thing about being a parent?*

## A prayer of love

As we light the fourth Advent candle, we think of all those who we love and who love us!

We thank You, God, for Your love for the world and the sending of Jesus, Immanuel, God with us who would die on the cross for the forgiveness of our sins, so that we could have the gift of eternal life.

We thank You for all our loved ones, family and friends – even though we may not be able to meet this Christmas may we find ways to share and show love to others.

Amen



## A verse to remember

### 2 Samuel 7 v 16

**But your family and your kingdom will continue always before me.  
Your throne will last forever.**

These words were spoken to King David through the prophet Nathan - compare them with the words of the Angel Gabriel in Luke 1:32-33 Jesus' birth had been part of God's plan for a very long time, the Old Testament is full of prophecies that Jesus fulfilled. Joseph was a direct descendant of King David!

To learn this verse together, you could come up with some actions to help you remember it or decorate a copy and put it up somewhere you can see it during the week.



### Active Advent

God is amazing and there will always be more of God for us to experience and come to know. Why not take on these challenges during the fourth week of Advent, you could do one each day or do them all at once, they are all about discovering more about God.

#### Dec 20th

Set a timer for 1 minute, how many different names and words can you think of to describe God?



#### Dec 21st

Read 1 Corinthians 12 v7-11, it talks about the different gifts God has for us. Ask God which gift He would like to give you today through the Holy Spirit.



#### Dec 22nd

Stretch out as wide as you can, now stretch up as high as you can. Read Ephesians 3:18-19 and see what it says about how BIG God's love is for you.



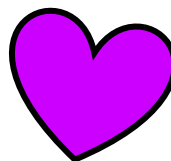
#### Dec 23rd

Jesus died on a cross so that our sins could be forgiven and we could be saved. God's forgiveness is for everybody. Take some time today to pray for a friend or family member who doesn't yet know God as their friend and Savior.



#### Dec 24th

We are precious children of God. Spend some time listening to God today. Ask God to tell you some of the things He loves about you!



#### Dec 25th

**Merry Christmas!** As you celebrate together don't forget to stop and sing Happy Birthday to Jesus – the reason for the season!

### Family Activity 1

Joseph was obedient--he did what the angel told him to do. Play a game of Simon says together, taking turns being the leader. You might like to talk together about what it means to be obedient and to commit ourselves to serving God.

### Family Activity 2

#### Angel Craft

Use the template on the next page to make your own printable angel decorations. You could hang them on your tree or around the house as a reminder of this part of the story.



### Family Activity 3

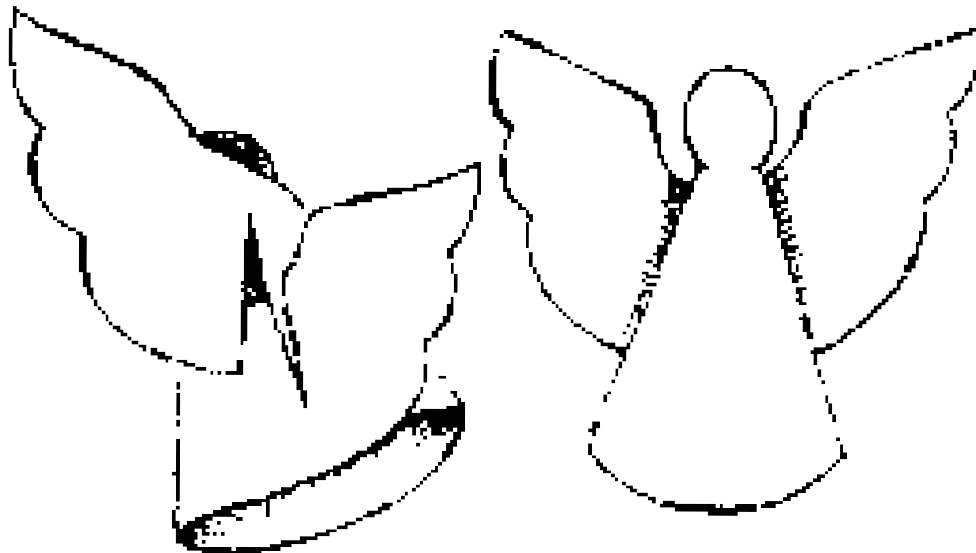
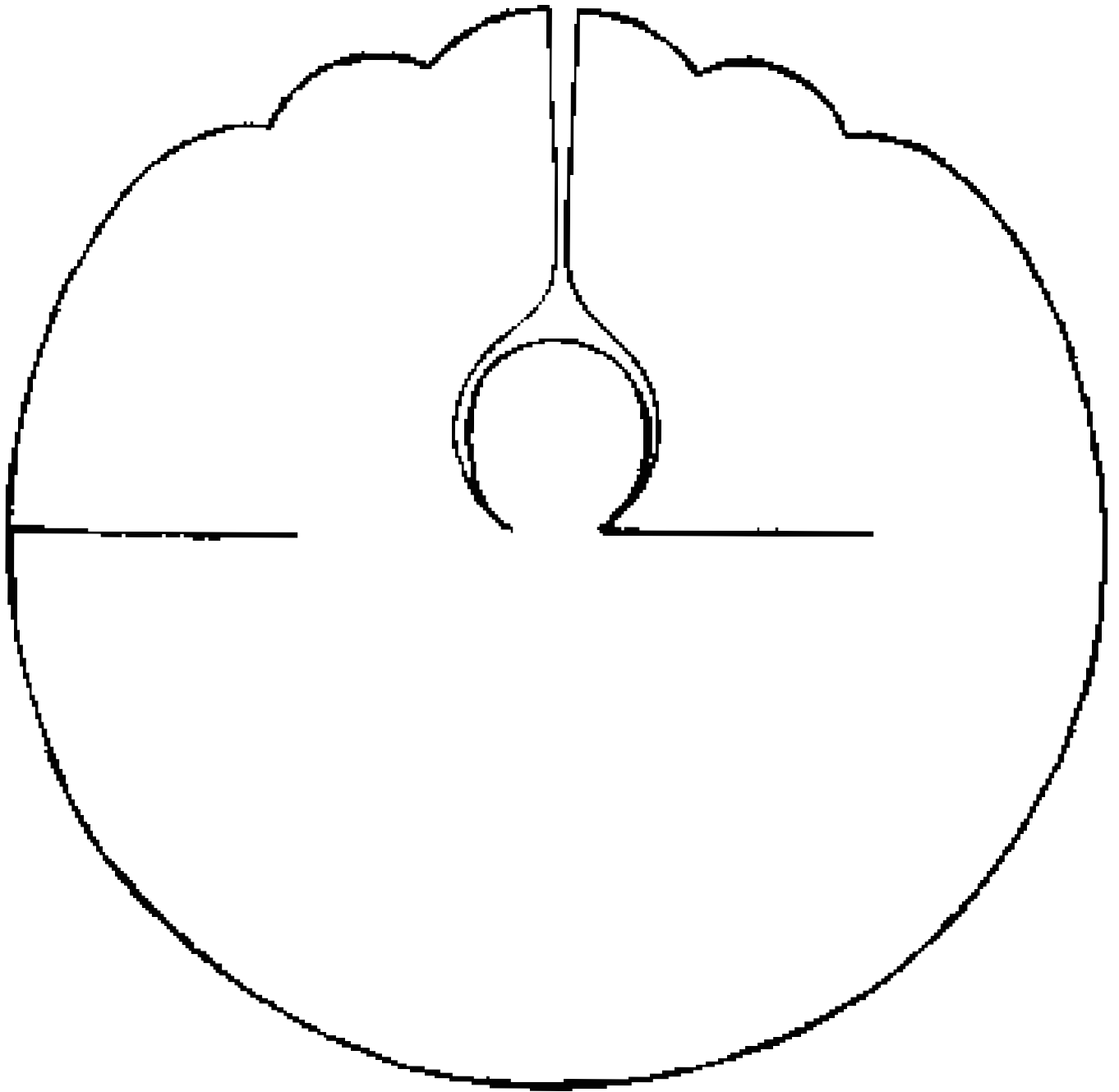
#### What's in a name?

Today we learned that God's Son had two special names: "Jesus" which means "the Lord saves" and "Emmanuel" which means "God-with-us." Jesus was God with flesh and bones who came to live with us to save us!

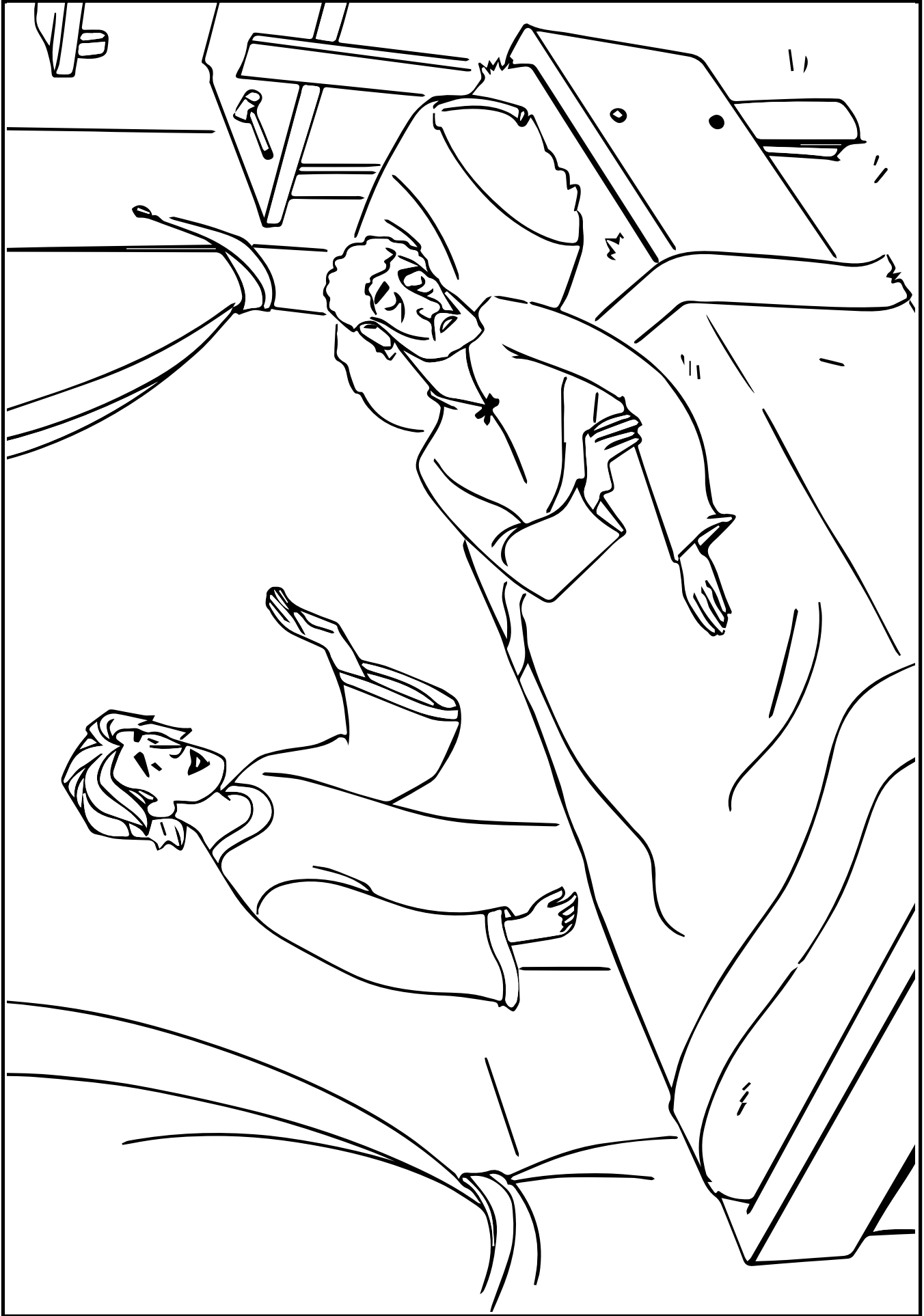
What does your name mean?

Decorate your name sign with pictures of things that represent you.

# Cone Angel Template



# Coloring Page



Joseph's Story

An angel appears throughout the Christmas story--to Zachariah (pictured here) to tell of the coming of the birth of John (the Baptist) who would prepare the way for Jesus' ministry, to Mary and Joseph to tell of their role in the birth of Jesus (his earthly parents), and finally, to proclaim Jesus' birth to the shepherds watching their flocks on a hillside that first Christmas night.



q i j v q n i b m l r c l q h  
j o p o r d y m e w d r n l t  
q p o z s z q i o d o j d f e  
e h p r o e r u b j j j z b r  
d b y d b b p u j e z p d t a  
v i a b a m j h s y r a m c z  
n h n g a a b u v x q y f x a  
r e g a h b s a t s i c f f n  
f g e o f l d m d b r y p h f  
x h l o q k u l d r t f y x l  
m l s j z m j h t y a j n q e  
s l f l y w t p h n c x q x u  
m e y f d w v r m r g j a m q  
v v u a g e f r s q o m t j c  
b l e s s e d e h m u y n b f

Can you find these words?

Mary	baby
Gabriel	Nazareth
angel	Joseph
Jesus	blessed