

Sample 3: A session for a well-established group in the catholic tradition held during a communion service.

Getting Ready for Baby Jesus (Advent) unit: week 2

Welcome

Welcome your group.

Let's start by going round the circle

and saying our name out loud.

My name's _____.

Go round the circle so that every adult and child has the chance to say his or her name (and introduce any dolls, teddies or toys).

If any of the children don't want to say their name or aren't able to, you (or a parent or carer) could say it for them and wave.

It's time to sing our Welcome Song!

*This Welcome and
Welcome Song remain
the same every week.*

Welcome Song: Option 2

Song: 'You are welcome in the name of the Lord' (traditional)

Tune: Traditional. For the music see p. 262, or for a taster see the Diddy Disciples website. For tips on teaching songs for the first time, see p. 215.

Welcome to *St Peter's!*

Let's wave with one hand. *Lead waving*

Then with our other hand. *Lead waving*

Then let's choose someone and show God's 'glory'!

Move arms up and down in front of you with fingers wiggling, palms facing out, towards one person.

And someone else! *Repeat*

Then let's wave with both hands all around the circle.

Lead waving.

We're ready to sing!

You are welcome in the name of the Lord!

Wave with right hand to one person.

You are welcome in the name of the Lord!

Wave with left hand to another person.

I can see all over you, the glory of the Lord!

Move arms up and down in front of you with fingers wiggling, palms facing out, towards one person and then another.

You are welcome in the name of the Lord!

Wave with both hands all around the circle.

Getting Ready to Worship: Option 1

Psalm 139.4

Action: The sign of the cross. Words © Sharon Moughtin-Mumby

Invite the children to make the sign of the cross slowly with you. As the children become more confident, invite a child to lead the action as the whole group says the words and makes the sign of the cross.

In my head,

touch head

in my heart,

touch chest

and all around me,

touch shoulders one by one

Jesus is here.

open hands in front facing upwards

*There are different 'Getting
Ready' options for different
church traditions.*

Introducing the Unit: Option 2

Focus: the liturgical colour, purple

Who can tell us what colour season we're in now?

If appropriate: You may have seen it in church.

The colour purple reminds us it's time to 'get ready'!
Baby Jesus is coming at Christmas!

If appropriate: Let's all look out for purple when we go back into church.

Or: Let's remember to look and see what colour we're in next time we go into church.

Gathering Song: Option 1

'Busy, busy, busy, getting ready for Christmas!' Words © Sharon Moughtin-Mumby

Tune: 'What shall we do with the drunken sailor?' (traditional).



Bu - sy, bu - sy, bu - sy, get - ting rea - dy for Christ - mas! Bu - sy, bu - sy, bu - sy, get - ting
rea - dy for Christ - mas! Bu - sy, bu - sy, bu - sy, get - ting rea - dy for Christ - mas! The
Light of the World is dawn - ing! Je - sus, Light of the World!_
Je - sus, Light of the World!_ Je - sus,
Light of the World, is dawn - ing in the dark - ness!

Baby Jesus is the Light of the World!
Let's close our eyes and feel the dark . . .
We're waiting for Baby Jesus, the Light of the World,
to shine in the darkness!
Let's open our eyes again.

You might like to show the children a picture of the sun rising, if you used one in the storytelling for week 1.
Like we wait for the sun to 'dawn',
to come up, in the morning.

If you're using imaginative aids, ask two or three children to give them out.
Let's show the sun 'dawning' with our bodies.

*This Gathering Song
remains the same for
the four-week unit.*



Let's crouch down low . . .

Let's close our eyes . . . it's dark!

Let's show the sun coming up and up and out . . .
in the morning.

Lead the children in showing the sun rising with your hands as you stand up.

The sun is 'dawning'!

Now let's do that as we sing our song,
'Jesus, Light of the World'.

Je-sus, Light of the World, Sun dawning action

Je-sus, Light of the World, Sun dawning action

Je-sus, Light of the World, is Sun dawning action

dawning in the darkness! Sun dawning action

Getting ready for Christmas can be very busy!
What have we been doing to get ready for Christmas?

Either invite the children to make suggestions, or choose from the suggestions below. For each activity sing the 'Busy, busy, busy, getting ready for Christmas' verse with an appropriate action designed by the children, followed by the 'Jesus, Light of the World' refrain.

hanging lights on the Christmas Tree . . . (we use lights at Christmas to remember that Jesus is the Light of the World!)

opening our Advent calendars

writing Christmas cards

cleaning our home

baking and cooking

wrapping presents

dancing at parties

Busy, busy, busy, getting ready for Christmas!

Busy, busy, busy, getting ready for Christmas!

Busy, busy, busy, getting ready for Christmas!

The Light of the World is dawning! Sun dawning action

Je-sus, Light of the World, Sun dawning action

Je-sus, Light of the World, Sun dawning action

Je-sus, Light of the World, is Sun dawning action

dawning in the darkness! Sun dawning action

Getting ready for Christmas can be very busy!

You might see your parents or carers at home running around
and getting very busy!

*If appropriate: Or your teachers at school getting stressed
about the Christmas/Nativity play!*

Let's all look busy and stressed like the adults!

Lead children in waving imaginative aids or arms around madly and running on the spot.

Let's sing 'Busy, busy, busy, getting ready for Christmas!' again.

Busy, busy, busy, getting ready for Christmas!

Busy, busy, busy, getting ready for Christmas!

Busy, busy, busy, getting ready for Christmas!

The Light of the World is dawning!



Je-sus, Light of the World, Sun dawning action
Je-sus, Light of the World, Sun dawning action
Je-sus, Light of the World, is Sun dawning action
dawning in the darkness! Sun dawning action

My goodness, that was busy!
Who's feeling tired?
When we're getting ready for Christmas
it can get really busy and really exciting!
Who's excited about Christmas?
In all the busyness,
let's remember to also have time for some quiet.
Let's remember to get ready for the very special baby
that's coming: Baby Jesus.

Let's sit quietly now and close our eyes . . .

Let's imagine holding Baby Jesus in our arms
and singing to him quietly and gently.
Baby Jesus will be born at Christmas!

Lead the children in rocking a baby and singing quietly.

Je-sus, Light of the World,
Je-sus, Light of the World,
Je-sus, Light of the World, is
dawning in the darkness!

One of the ways we get ready inside *Trace a circle on your heart*
is to tell stories about Baby Jesus.
We're going to tell one of those stories today.

Interactive Bible Storytelling: Getting Ready for Baby Jesus, week 2

Luke 1.26-38

“Yes!” said Mary’. Words © Sharon Moughtin-Mumby

Tune: “Pop!” goes the weasel’ (traditional).

An an - gel came to Ma - ry. 'You will have a ba - by!
He will be the Son of God! 'Yes!' said Ma - ry.

If you're using the What's in the Box? option (p. 221), invite one of the children to open the box. Inside will be an angel or a picture of an angel. Like last week, you might even like to show your group a photograph of an angel depicted somewhere in your church building.

What's in the box? Ask the child to respond.
This is the angel Gabriel.

He's a very special angel.
Gabriel takes messages from God to people:
he's like a post-angel.



Today Gabriel's going to take a message
to a girl called Mary.

To tell our story today, we need to learn a song.

The actions of this song are designed to mirror a jack-in-the-box, with its lid closing and the puppet bursting out at the 'pop' moment. To teach this song, sing it alone the first time, with the children copying your actions. See if they can join in on the second time around.

Start standing on tiptoes with your hands stretched high. You could make angel wings (like butterfly wings) with your hands.

An angel came to Ma-a-a-ry.

Bring hands down from on high and come down from tiptoes.

'You will have a baby!

Rock baby, standing at normal height.

He will be the Son of God!

Crouch down on the ground like tiny child.

'Yes!' sa-id Mary.

Jump up and shout 'Yes!'

Repeat until the group is confident.

*This Bible Storytelling is
the only part of the session
that changes every week.*

We're going to tell the story of our song together now.

First we need to practise showing

how we feel with just our faces.

Not opening our mouths at all.

Who can show me . . .

As you list the following emotions one by one, give the children time to show each emotion with their face.

You might like to point out some good examples given by the children:

sad . . .

happy . . .

confused (when you don't understand) . . .

amazed! . . .

scared.

We're ready to tell our story.

Mary was at home, sweeping the house.

Let's be Mary and sweep together.

Hum the tune of 'Pop goes the weasel' quietly as you sweep.

Suddenly, the room was filled with light!

Shield eyes with hand.

The brightest light Mary had ever seen!

Mary saw an angel standing there!

She fell to the floor!

Lead the children in kneeling.

We're going to be the angel Gabriel together.

These words are very important.

Let's kneel up high on our knees for a moment

to say the angel's words together.

It's 'my turn point to self your turn' leader's hands out to group

Lead the children in saying the following words.



Hello Mary. *Wave*

Hello Mary. *Wave*

Don't be frightened. *Hands out*

Don't be frightened. *Hands out*

God is very happy with you! *Draw smile on face*

God is very happy with you! *Draw smile on face*

You're going to have a baby: *Rock arms*

You're going to have a baby: *Rock arms*

a little boy called Jesus. *Rock arms*

a little boy called Jesus. *Rock arms*

He's going to be King! *Place imaginary crown on head*

He's going to be King! *Place imaginary crown on head*

Wow! These words are very special words.

Shall we say them again together?

Hello Mary. *Wave*

Hello Mary. *Wave*

Don't be frightened. *Hands out*

Don't be frightened. *Hands out*

God is very happy with you! *Draw smile on face*

God is very happy with you! *Draw smile on face*

You're going to have a baby: *Rock arms*

You're going to have a baby: *Rock arms*

a little boy called Jesus. *Rock arms*

a little boy called Jesus. *Rock arms*

He's going to be King! *Place crown on head*

He's going to be King! *Place crown on head*

I wonder how Mary's feeling now?

Invite the children to explore their feelings or use the following. As you list these emotions one by one, give the children time to show each emotion with their face. You might like to pick out some examples given by the children.

Can you show me amazed?

Show me scared!

Show me happy! Show me excited!

Mary is feeling lots of things!

Mary's also feeling confused.

Show me confused! Mary doesn't understand.

Can you show me how you look

when you don't understand – when you're confused?

Lead the children in looking confused.

Mary says, 'How? I'm not meant to have a baby yet!

I'm just a girl.'

Let's put our hands out like a question and say 'How?'

The angel says, 'The Holy Spirit will come on you . . .'

Let's all raise our hands in the air

and bring them down in front of us

to show the Holy Spirit coming down.

The angel says,

'The Holy Spirit will come down.'



Your baby will be very special,
he will be the Son of God!

Mary's baby isn't going to just be a king,
He's going to be God!
I wonder how Mary is feeling now?
Can you show me?
One last special action! . . .

And then, do you know what Mary says?
She says, 'Yes!' Can you nod your head in a big 'Yes'?
Lead the children in nodding: 'Yes!'

Mary says, 'I am God's servant.
YES. I will do this!'
Then the angel leaves.
I wonder how Mary is feeling now?
How would you feel,
if an angel came to your home?!
Can you show me?
Accept any responses.

Let's sing our song about Mary's story.
Start standing on tiptoes with your hands stretched high. You could make angel wings (like butterfly wings) with your hands.

An angel came to Ma-a-a-ry. *Bring hands down from on high and come down from tiptoes.*
'You will have a baby!' *Rock baby, standing at normal height.*
He will be the Son of God!' *Crouch down on the ground like a tiny child.*
'Yes!' sa-id Mary. *Jump up and shout 'Yes!'*

Mary said 'yes' to God!
I wonder how easy you find it to say 'yes'?
I wonder what would have happened if Mary had said 'no!'
Accept any responses.

Thankfully, Mary said 'yes!'
After three, let's all nod and say 'yes!' together like Mary.
1, 2, 3 . . . Yes!

Let's sing our song one last time to finish
and sing our 'yes' especially loud and clear.
Let's imagine saying 'yes' to God like Mary.

Start by standing on tiptoes with your hands stretched high.
An angel came to Ma-a-a-ry. *Bring hands down from on high and come down from tiptoes.*
'You will have a baby!' *Rock baby, standing at normal height.*
He will be the Son of God!' *Crouch down on the ground like a tiny child.*
'Yes!' sa-id Mary. *Jump up and shout 'Yes!'*



Prayers for Other People: Option 1

Ephesians 6.18; Jeremiah 29.7; Nehemiah 1.11

Song: 'Jesus, hear our prayer!' Words © Sharon Moughtin-Mumby

Tune: 'Brown girl in the ring' (traditional). For the music see p. 260 of Book 1.

For the world:

Jesus, hear our prayer!

Make a circle shape

Open hands upwards to God

For the Church:

Jesus, hear our prayer!

Praying hands

Open hands upwards to God

For our place, *Walworth:**

Jesus, hear our prayer!

Hands down moving out in

Open hands upwards to God

a semi-circle to show the land around us

Lord Jesus, hear our prayer. Amen.

Open hands upwards to God

** Insert local area/school/church/community/parish.*

For the sick and lonely:

Jesus, hear our prayer!

*Fingers showing tears falling
down cheeks*

Open hands upwards to God

For our friends and family:

Jesus, hear our prayer!

Arms around yourself

Open hands upwards to God

For ourselves:

Jesus, hear our prayer!

Both hands on heart

Open hands upwards to God

Lord Jesus, hear our prayer. Amen.

Open hands upwards to God.

Let's close our eyes for a moment.

I wonder if there's someone special
you'd like to pray for?

Let's imagine them now.

Now, let's imagine Jesus coming to them.

Does Jesus say anything?

Does Jesus do anything?

Let's open our eyes.

Prayer Action: Option 3

John 8.12; Matthew 4.16

Action: placing lit candles (battery tealights) on a world map

Place your world map in the centre of the circle.

This is a map of the world.

Jesus is the Light of the World!

Show the children one or more baskets/trays holding lit battery tealights.

Now as we pray, we're going to turn the lights off
for a moment and look at these candles here.

In a moment, *Name* and *Name*

are going to bring round these candles.

If you like, you could take one.

Let's sing as we wait in the dark.

Let's hold our hands out gently like this *Model cupped hands*

as we wait for Jesus to shine in our world.

*This time of prayer remains
the same for the four-week
unit and can be used for any
unit. There are different Prayer
Building Blocks available.*

*At St Peter's, Walworth,
we've used a map jigsaw
(the children can also
explore it afterwards).*



Hum the tune together, with the words 'Jesus, hear our prayer!' as a refrain, until all the children and adults who wish to take tealights have done so.

If appropriate:

At the moment, there's fighting in the world here and here. *As leader, place a candle on the chosen locations. Name the countries or areas if appropriate.*

There's been an earthquake [or other disaster] here. *As leader, place a candle.*
There are people who have no homes here. *As leader, place a candle.*
There are people who need our prayers all over the world.

As we sing again, let's put our lights on the world.
You can put your little light anywhere you like.
Let's ask God to hear our lights as prayers for the world.

Hum the tune together, with the words 'Jesus, hear our prayer!' as a refrain, as you lead the children in placing the candles on the map. We've found that asking the children to do this in age groups helps, as the older children tend to be more intent on finding a location than the others. We invite babies first, then nursery and reception children, then Year 1 and upwards (including the adults). Once all the children and adults who wish to place a candle have done so, end with the final verse of the 'Jesus, hear our prayer!' song.

Take our prayers:	Jesus, hear our prayer!
<i>Hands together gently</i>	<i>Open hands upwards to God</i>
Make them holy:	Jesus, hear our prayer!
<i>Hands together gently</i>	<i>Open hands upwards to God</i>
Make them beautiful:	Jesus, hear our prayer!
<i>Hands together gently</i>	<i>Open hands upwards to God</i>
Lord Jesus, hear our prayer! Amen.	
<i>Hands together gently, then open hands upwards to God.</i>	

Creative Response

This is a well-established group in a rhythm with their Creative Responses. Each week they present the group with one starter idea that's related to the week's story and two other starter ideas that are related to the unit and therefore remain the same for the four-week unit.

The books provide a wide range of Starter Ideas for each week & unit, including print-and-go material.

As babies and toddlers are present in the group, they also provide Sensory Starter Ideas that remain the same for the four-week unit.

Weekly Starter Idea:

- Invite the children to paint Mary's face with pastels or paints. 'I wonder what Mary looked like?' Encourage the children to think of a 'strong woman' they know who would be brave enough to say 'yes' to God like Mary (their mum, teacher, aunt, head teacher, granny, a friend) to use as a model. Or the children might like to let their imagination go wild. *Provide paper, crayons/pencils or paints/pastels, or other interesting media (p. 256). Optional: you may like to provide face templates (p. 267 or website) as a guide*

Unit Starter Ideas:

- Invite the children to explore light shining in the darkness by creating their own 'light' patterns with oil pastels, paint, chalk or glitter on dark paper. *Provide dark paper plus oil pastels/paint/chalk/glitter.*
- Invite the children to collage their own angel: 'I wonder what angels might look like?' *Provide: angel templates (p. 283 or website), glue, scissors, collage materials (p. 255).*



Sensory Starter Ideas:

- a Baby Jesus doll along with a manger
- Christmas cards of famous Nativity paintings or major characters from the stories plus a box with a slot cut into it for the children to post the cards
- a durable Nativity set (we use PlayMobil 123's Christmas manger)
- a range of plastic animals from the Nativity stories: sheep, a donkey, cows, hens;
- battery tealights with a wooden tealight holder with four holes for children to place the candles in and take out again.
- a foil survival blanket cut into medium size pieces
- board books with Nativity stories
- a range of different Christmas smells for the children to explore. Add drops of essential oils to scraps of material and place in little pots for the children to investigate.

Sharing God's Peace: Option 2

Song: 'Peace is flowing like a river' (traditional). Isaiah 66.12, niv

Tune: Traditional.

Hold one end of the peace cloth (see Guide, Book 1, p. 231) and ask one of the older children or an adult to hold the other end. Start singing the Peace Song. As the children begin to gather, invite them to join in holding a small section of the cloth, raising and lowering it so it 'flows' like a river as you sing together.

**Peace is flowing like a river,
flowing out through you and me.
Spreading out into the desert,
setting all the captives free.**

The peace of the Lord be always with you.
Hold hands open to the children.

And also with you.

Invite the children to open their hands towards you.

Let's shake hands or hug each other
and say 'Peace be with you' as a sign of God's peace.
Lead the children in giving and receiving the Peace.

Hold one end of the peace cloth (see Guide, Book 1, p. 231) and ask one of the older children or an adult to hold the other end. Start singing the Peace Song. As the children begin to gather, invite them to join in holding a small section of the cloth, raising and lowering it so it 'flows' like a river as you sing together.

**I've got peace like a river,
I've got peace like a river,
I've got peace like a river in my soul.
I've got peace like a river,
I've got peace like a river,
I've got peace like a river in my soul.**

*This closing song remains
the same for every session.
Different Peace songs are
available for different*