

Children's Ministry Newsletter is published monthly by Children's Ministries of the Church of God of Prophecy,
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Ministry Direction



"Some children see Him lily white,
 The baby Jesus born this night,
 Some children see Him lily white,
 With tresses soft and fair.
 Some children see Him bronzed and brown,
 The Lord of heaven to earth come down;
 Some children see him bronzed and brown,
 With dark and heavy hair.

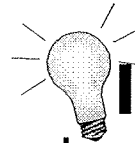
Some children see Him almond-eyed,
 This Savior whom we kneel beside,
 Some children see him almond-eyed,
 With skin of yellow hue.
 Some children see him dark as they,
 Sweet Mary's Son, to whom we pray,
 Some children see Him dark as they,
 And oh! They love Him, too!

The children in each different place
 Will see the baby Jesus' face
 Like theirs, but bright with heavenly grace,
 And filled with holy light.
 O lay aside each earthly thing,
 And with thy heart as offering,
 Come worship now the infant King,
 'Tis love that's born tonight!"



Each child to whom you minister will look upon a manger scene during the Christmas season. They will see a tiny baby doll placed in a bed of hay to represent Jesus, God's only Son. But will each child truly see Jesus? Will they recognize that because of His love for them, He came to this earth. He did not bypass infancy or childhood. No, the

Son of God was willing to endure even that trying time of life so that He could understand the conflicts, fears and needs of even a young child. During this Christmas season focus every effort on helping the children see Jesus.



Ideas You Can Use!

Lesson Launchers for the Christmas Season:



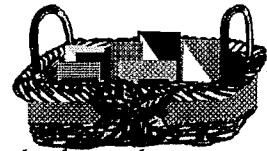
A Surprise Package

Preparation: Wrap a very large gift and a small gift in beautiful paper and ribbons. Stuff a large brown paper bag with newspaper. Place a picture or small figure of baby Jesus in the manger in the bag. Fold the edges of the bag and staple.

Presentation: Place the three gifts at the front of the room. When you are ready to begin the lesson, invite the children to come sit on the floor near the gift that they would most like to receive.

After the children have made their choice talk with them about the fact that sometimes wonderful gifts come in surprise packages. Ask one of them to open the paper bag and show the other children what they found inside. Encourage them to listen to discover all the surprises associated with the birth of God's only son.

Is It? Is It Not?



Preparation: Collect at least 20 Christmas cards. Place in a basket or box.

Presentation: Introduce your lesson by showing each Christmas card. Ask the children to decide if the symbols or pictures on the card represent what is real and true about Christmas. Challenge the children to listen closely as you tell the Christmas story to see if they made the right choices. After you have shared the story of Christmas, go back through the cards and allow the children to tell why each card does or doesn't reflect the truth of Christmas.

It's Better To Give Than Receive

Use the following ideas to challenge the children in your ministry to focus on what they will give during the Christmas season rather than on what they will receive.

Stocking Stuffers.

Let the children make stockings from large paper bags. Provide stocking patterns made from cardstock. Instruct the children to trace and cut out two stockings. Glue them together around the edges then decorate with bits of felt, buttons, ribbon trim. The children are to take the stockings home and stuff them full of the suggested items. When the children return the stuffed stockings, place them in a decorated box or basket and deliver to one of the following locations:

Crisis Pregnancy Center.

Items needed: infant socks, rattles, bibs

Homeless Shelter.

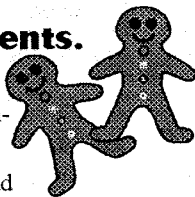
Items needed: Caps, gloves, razors, toothbrushes, socks

Children's Hospital.

Items needed: Markers, crayons, card games, marbles, small stuffed animals

I Love You! Ornaments.

Provide large gingerbread cookie cutters and heavy light brown construction paper. Encourage the children to cut out one gingerbread person for each member of his family. On one side of the ornament he is to write a note of love, encouragement, or affirmation to the family member. The other side can be decorated using felt, trim, buttons, etc. Using a hole punch, punch a hole at the top of the ornament, thread and knot a ribbon through the hole so that each ornament can be hung on the family Christmas tree.



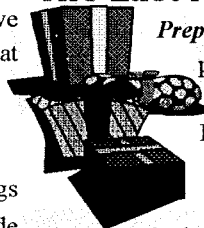
A Thank You Surprise.

On note cards write the name of each person that serves in your church. Place the cards in a bag. Give each child a small gift box. Provide him with inexpensive but useful items to place in the box such as "post-it" notes, bookmark, pen or pencil, etc. Provide wrapping paper or let the child decorate a plain white bag. After every child has filled and wrapped a gift box, talk with them about sharing a thank-you gift with those who serve in the church. Let each child select a name from the bag and deliver the "thank you gift" to the servant he selected.



Christmas Gospel Messages!

The Last Present



Preparation: Wrap four Christmas presents. Take one of them to the front of the room with you. Place the other three presents throughout the room.

Presentation: *Well, Christmas is over. I think the saddest moment of Christmas is when you unwrap the last present. I've saved my last present to unwrap with you. Then it's all over.* (Unwrap the present. Let the kids see what it is.)

That's it. No more presents. I guess Christmas is all over. Wait. I think there's one more gift. Can you help me find it? (Let kids find the gifts. Unwrap the first two presents, but don't open the last present.)

You know, there really is never a last Christmas present. There's always one more. (Read John 1:14.) *When God gave us his Son for Christmas, God gave us a lifetime of gifts our sins will always be forgiven, and the happiness we feel at Christmas is ours all year long. Even when we die, we can go to be with God for a Christmas celebration that will last forever.*

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What Will You Do With God's Gift?

Preparation: Wrap a gift in gold paper with red ribbon. Prepare a sheet of paper with the word G I F T written vertically down the page. Then the words Given, Ignore, Forget, and Take written beside each letter. Fold the paper so the words can be revealed one at a time.



Presentation: *What is a gift? Is it something you earn? Is it something you work hard for? Is it something you buy? No.* (Show first word.) *It is something that is given to you, usually by someone who loves you.*

What can you do with a gift that is given to you? You can ignore the gift. (Show second word.) *Perhaps the gift is not as large as others gifts you have received. Perhaps you have already gotten the things that you wanted and you don't think you need that gift. Or you might forget that a gift is there for you.* (Show third word.) *But the best thing you can do with a gift is to take it.* (Show fourth word.) *Take it and open it! A gift only becomes yours when you receive it for yourself.*

Who is this gift for? (Read tag-To: As many as receive it.) *This gift is for everyone who will take it! Who would give such a gift?* (Read tag-With love, from God.)

God's book, the Bible, tells us that He loves us so much He gave us a special gift.

Guide the children through the following Gospel truths:

1) There is no one who is good (Romans 3:10). *Sin separates us from a holy God.*

2) Sin will be punished (Romans 6:23).

3) God loves you and made a way through His Son for you to be forgiven of your sin (1 John 4:14). *Jesus who never sinned died on the cross to save us from our sin and give us a new life that will last forever.*

Let's open the gift God has given us. (Open gift and pull out a gold paper crown with the words "power to become the sons of God" written on it.) *When you believe that Jesus died for your sins and receive Him as your Savior you will become a child of God. Your sins will be forgiven. You will have everlasting life.*

Will you receive God's gift of everlasting life today?

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Resource Review

Instant Christmas Pageants published by Group Publishing, PO Box 481, Loveland, CO 80539, 800-447-1070, www.grouppublishing.com. Cost: 24.99 each.

These fully prepared pageants let kids simply pantomime parts—a complete soundtrack provides all voices, music, and sound effects! Titles include:

- Wee Three Kings
- The Not-So-Silent Night
- Live From Bethlehem
- The Fumbly Bumbly Angels
- The Mouse's Tale

