

Advent Activities



Revesby Uniting Church

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Christmas At Revesby Uniting Church

Christmas is a very busy time for us at Revesby Uniting just as in most other churches. Throughout the year we have many opportunities for mission but at Christmas we have a sequence of activities that enable us to share our love of Jesus with others in a range of ways.

Christmas is a special time for adults and children alike. We wanted to find ways to

- Provide a range of experiences that reflect the celebration, joy, wonder and mystery of Christmas for all in our local community.
- Offer the community a Christ Centred Christmas celebration
- To promote the church as a positive, secure place of friendship ,fun and nurture which reflects the love and grace of God.

Over the past number of years we have developed a range of activities that help us to meet these aims.

These include

- Children's' Disco
- Advent Workshops
- Carols by Candlelight
- Christmas Eve Family Service
- Christmas Day

Following are some ideas that we have used. I hope you find them helpful

1. Weekly Services

Services are lectionary based which allow us to work with specific themes each week.

Liturgy, music, images, stories, and children's activities are all linked to the theme. We have found this enables us to engage the congregation using a variety of learning styles each week and provides common reference for children and adults alike. The children are a part of the service up until the sermon where they then move off with the adult rostered on for that month. Normal parts of our service include

- Lighting the Christ Candle (adults and children)
- Singing varied types and styles of music
- Prayers that are child friendly until they leave for activity time.
- Bible readings Adults and children
- Imaging the word
 - A story either told or read. If read it's usually shown on Data projector
 - An object talk
 - A drama
 - A snippet from a dvd relating to theme.

 - A response activity eg drawing, talk, make Music

At Christmas we always introduce the Advent wreath and each week we use appropriate liturgy and light the appropriate coloured candle. We usually sing a song to remind us of the theme

Week 1 Waiting in Hope

Week2 Comfort and peace

Week3 Joy

Week 4 Grace and love

2. Family Services

We would hope that all of our services are child friendly, but this service is different in that it is geared specifically towards the pre-school children and their parents . The service

is shorter ,
fast paced,
contains a lot of movement for children
is more visual eg colour, books , dvds, interactive dramas

Usually the children sing a number of songs which is a real highlight. We usually conclude the day with a BBQ where we supply lunch for the visitors.

At the Christmas service the children can

- help to decorate the tree
- help place presents under the tree (usually tinned food)
- make a decoration
- Sing happy birthday to Jesus



3. Children's Disco Christmas Party

This is run by our teenage youth group and was a major success when we introduced it last year. It was held for our childcare children and the whole family was invited. The children had a mixture of known dances

mixed with free dancing and games. A sausage sizzle was held in conjunction to allow families to have their dinner at the church.



Carols By Candlelight

We hold this in our local Primary school and usually try to gear it around our

Advent Theme. We have free sausage sizzle, craft , jumping castles and live entertainment from 6.30

and the carols start at 8pm. We have singing, readings and a children's story. Last year we had many people from our local community come along for the first time.



4. Christmas Eve

This is a family service and is usually fairly creative and interactive. We try to make it a very sensory experience by using varied lighting effects , the burning of incense such as frankincense or fragrant candles and varied props.

We have included dance, drama, candle lighting, film clips, varied styles of music and storytelling.

Stories used include Wombat Divine, Christmas Miracle of Jonathon Toomey.

Advent workshops

Advent workshops provide an opportunity for children in our wider community to experience the Christmas story through storytelling, craft, drama, music and games in a fun and safe environment.

Each year we select a theme which is used as a vehicle to share the story of Christ's birth. We target our local primary schools and usually have between 30-40 children ranging from 4 years -12 years. As we have a fairly small congregation we have many of us double up in roles but no-one seems to mind. We usually hold workshops on Thursdays but this varies depending on the day that suits most people. We usually have these roles.

Co_ordinators x2, Music co-ordinator, Afternoon tea co-ordinator, Registration Co-ordinator
We all work together to develop themes and crafts

Our program is as follows.

Setting up On the night before we set up the environment for the theme and organize the tressles and set out craft packs and equipment.

Organise registration tables and make sure ice-blocks are in the fridge.

3:00pm	Afternoon tea co-ordinator arrives and starts setting up food.
3:30-4.00	Children arrive and register. Put on tags. Have afternoon tea and play organized outside games.(inside if hot)
4:00- 4:15	Story time/ drama/ song
4:15- 5:00	Craft activities (music playing throughout)
5:00-5:15	Song, read a story ,prayer
5:15	Dismissal (children wait inside for parent) Cleaning up

We have used this time frame for the past 8 years and it seems to work well.

Following is a brief overview of our themes that help us explore the following concepts

Week 1	Christmas is coming/getting ready Luke 1:26-28 Mat 1:18-25
Week 2	Christmas is giving Mat 2: 1-12 Magi
Week 3	Christmas is Joy Luke2: 8-20 Shepherds
Week 4	Christmas is celebration Jesus is Born Luke 2;1-7

Following are very brief outlines or the of our themes that Revesby Uniting Church have developed over the past few years. Two of these will be posted on our Website with the others yet to come. Please keep a lookout as we'll keep updating resources.

Time Travelers

Come and travel through time with us in the Time tunnel. Each week the children meet a character of the day who talks about a great event that's happening. We used the plays and activities from the Advent workshops for kids book but added in an extra character.

- Week 1 We meet Mary's next door neighbour who tells of a terrible commotion. Perform Mary and Joseph play
- Week 2 We meet a shepherd . Perform The Angels and the shepherds.
- Week 3 We meet Ahmad the boy hired to look after the three Kings camels. Perform Travelling by Night.
- Week 4 The Nativity Children dress up as varied characters and join in an interactive reading.

A Bush Christmas

Come and join Bushman Bill as he comes to the city to discover the meaning of Christmas. Each week he comes along to our church to find out more about the Christmas story. We read a Christmas story about Australian Animals each week. On the Final week we travel back to his farm for a bush Christmas Party.

- Week 1 Getting ready for Christmas
Read Tari's First Christmas by Mary Feddieson
- Week2 Christmas is about giving
Read Kippy Koala's Christmas Present by Win Morgan
- week 3 Read Wombat Divine by Mem Fox
- week 4 Read The Nativity illustrated by Julie Vivas

Christmas Mystery Tour

Join Pilot Pete and his friends as we travel around the world each week visiting other countries and discovering the real meaning of Christmas'

- Week 1 We will visit Germany and learn of the tradition of the Christmas tree.
- Week2 We will travel to Mexico and learn about giving as we hear the traditional story of the poinsettia .
- Week3 We will visit Spain and hear of the birth of Christ and the relevance of the nativity scenes we have at Christmas.
- Week 4 We fly back to Australia for a fabulous Christmas Party to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

Christmas Under the Big Top

Roll up roll up ! Come along and join the circus and discover the meaning of Christmas.

- Week 1 Today we focus on the excitement and anticipation of something coming. We will show the circus performers setting up and rehearsing and getting ready. Links will be made to Mary preparing for her

baby in story.

- Week 2 Today we focus on the fact that circus people travel all over the place. We will commence with a skit of clown with a huge backpack. We'll focus on people traveling to get ready for Jesus birth. Mary and Joseph, the shepherd and the Kings
- Week 3 Today we will dramatise the Nativity using varied characters. What we were waiting for has arrived.
- Week 4 Today we focus on Christ as a gift of god . We will look at how God sees each of us as special . We relate this to the special talents of performers who make a circus complete by performing together. We will Culminate the workshops with a performance from the Aristotle Circus and a BBQ.

Guess Who's Coming to Christmas

Come and join us each week at the Television studios of Crazy Cat productions to be part of the audience in GUESS WHO'S COMING TO CHRISTMAS. Each week we will select a lucky member of the audience to be a contestant. Come along and join in the fun.

- Week1 The Angel
- week2 The Innkeeper
- Week3 The King



The Story Teller

Based on Meg Everard's "Experience Christmas"

Come and join a little boy and his grandfather as they spend a few days together in the bush to get away from the hustle and bustle of Christmas. Listen and watch as the Christmas story comes to life. Each week a tabloid will take place as the story is being told

- Week1 The angel comes to the Shepherds
- Week2 The wise men travel to Bethlehem
- Week 3 The Nativity



A Bush Christmas

Overview

Over the Advent period we follow a family as they head off into the bush for Christmas only to find when they get there that their stay is effected by the tough times being experienced by their relatives due to the drought. Let's join in their adventure as they head off for a Christmas in the bush.



Week 1: Getting Ready

Drama

See the family trying to pack the car. This can be quite comical as they bring totally ridiculous items such as surfboards, flippers etc Discuss with family the long journey ahead, the excitement and expectation of what's to come. Finish the scene with the family setting off.

Bible links

Mary and Joseph getting ready to return to Bethlehem for the census decreed by the Emperor Augustus. Discuss the planning, what they'd need to take, the feelings involved.

Week 2: The Journey

Drama

The scene starts in the car with the family singing "Ten Green Bottles" The children are restless .Dad states that he thinks they're a little lost. Mum gets out an enormous map and turns it upside down and sideways. Children keep interrupting with "Are we there yet"? Dad stops the car and checks the map. Dad finds where they are and says it's lucky we've got a map to help them find the way. Restart the journey.

Bible Links

Read the story of the three kings on their journey using the star to guide them (Matthew 2: 1-12)

Week 3: Too Busy / No room

Drama

Arriving at the farm the family discovers that everyone is too busy to spend time with them because of the drought. The new house is much too small and the family must stay in the wool shed. They decide to do something to help the country people celebrate Christmas.

Bible links

Mary and Joseph arrive in Bethlehem but there is no room for them in the inn and they stay in the cattle stall.

Week 4: An Outback Christmas

Drama

The family finalize the decorations and welcome people from near and far to celebrate Christmas day with them. Music is playing in the background and the food is prepared.

Bible links

The birth of Jesus Luke 2: 1-7

Music

Christmas in the Scrub
Tell me the Story of Christmas

Music and CD Leigh Newton
Peter Coombs

Detailed Program

Week 1: Getting Ready

Preparation

You will need something to give the impression of car. This could be a large box, 4 chairs placed 2x2 or a wooden cut out of a car. It should be able fit 2 people at least as two are the minimum number required for the dramas.

Numerous large objects to pack eg a giant teddy, a surfboard, suitcases
A large map



Setting up

The car should be the focal point today and needs to be set up where children can sit close to it ready for the drama to take place. props need to be placed nearby so they can be brought over to the car.

Story time

As the children are moving into the area, the drama team can be already into action. They can be calling out things like Can you get my bag mum? When are we going? The children should be close enough to allow actors to move in and out of them so they feel as if they are part of the action and excitement. The script written below can be added to. This is just a guide to give some direction.

Boy : I can't wait to go on holidays. When can we go mum?
Mum: Well we've still got a lot of packing to do but it shouldn't be too long.
Sister: Come on everyone. I want to go. Can I take my big teddy?
Dad: Goodness, anyone would think we are going for a month? Whose Surf board is this? We're going out west where there's a drought ' You won't need a surfboard or these flippers. Even the dam's dried up.
Mum: Don't forget the presents and the food hamper.
Boy: I'll get that mum, then can we go can we go?
Mum: I'm really excited about seeing the family. They sure have had a tough time lately.
Girl: Yeah I can't wait to see our cousins and ride on their horse.
Boy: And I can't wait to ride on the tractor.
Dad: Well we won't be going anywhere if we don't get a move on. Ok lets see if we've got everything. Have we got all our bags?
All: yep
Mum: Have you all put your bags in the car?
All: Yep
Dad: Then let's get going. All aboard everyone. Have we got the map?
Mum: Sure have.
Dad: Then put your seat belts on and off we go.
All: Whoa whoo . Bush Christmas here we come.

Leader

Have you ever felt excited about going away? What were some of the things that the family in our story needed to get ready?

(encourage children to respond and praise all attempts)

It's an exciting time when we are getting ready for something special or planning to go somewhere. At Christmas time we remember the story about a man and lady whose names were Mary and Joseph. They lived a long time ago and they were getting ready for a special event and a big trip too. Mary was pregnant and about to have a baby. A baby she knew was going to be very special. But before the baby was born they had to make a trip

to a town called Bethlehem which was a long way away.

How do you think they would get to Bethlehem? What do you think they would have to take with them?
How do you think Mary might be feeling?

Well they set off on their long journey full of excitement just like our family who were heading off to the country for Christmas. We'll see where their journey takes them next week.

Craft Groups

Infants 1 Wattle Christmas Card
2 Mask of an Australian Animal



Primary 1 Quilling Christmas cards

There will be easier levels for years 3,4



Gathering
Sing: Little Donkey

Read Donkey Daniel



Lets talk to God Let's pray

Dear God,

Christmas is a time when we are getting ready for lots of exciting things. We might be getting ready to decorate our Christmas tree , or to wrap up some presents or we might be getting ready to go on a holiday. Thank you for all the times in our life when we feel excited and happy. Thank you that no matter where we are or where we go, you love us and are always with us just like you were with Mary and Joseph.

Week 2 The Journey

Preparation

The car.
A large map and a torch for mum.
Gold stars hanging around room.
Lights dimmed if possible.



Setting Up

The car should be the focal point and the family should be sitting in the car pretending to drive along as the children enter. They could be singing Ten green bottles and the children could be encouraged to join in as they are being seated.

Storytime

- Boy : What time is it? Are we there yet? We've been driving all day.
- Dad: We should be there soon but this road doesn't look right. I think we might have taken a wrong turn.
Girl: Look at all those cows. Oh No! This is a dead end track. We're lost.
- Mum: Oh don't panic. I'm sure it's not far from here. I'll just get out the map.
mum tries to read the enormous map while the car is bumping along. She turns it around getting it in Dads face)
- Dad: I can't see a thing. I'll pull over. Let's hop out to get a better look.(they all get out of the car. Mum and dad study the map while the kids look at the stars)
- Mum: Stay close by please kids. It's quite dark out here now.
- Boy: Wow !Look at the stars out here. There are so many.
- Girl: They're so bright. Look at that one. (points to star)
- Boy: Remember in the Christmas story how the the three kings followed the bright star to find baby Jesus. I wonder if it looked like that?
- Girl: Maybe.
- Dad: Come on you two. We know where we're going now! In you get. Seat belts on.
- Mum: I'm so glad we had the light and the map to help us find our way.
- Kids: Yeah. Just like the three wise men all those years ago .
(When the focus is on the leader move out of the car)

Leader

Have you ever been on a journey where you weren't sure of the way. What helped our family today to find their way? In the Christmas story we hear about lots of people who were traveling just like our family today. Mary and Joseph were traveling to Bethlehem and we hear of some wise men or Kings who were travelling on a long, long journey in search of a new king. They did not know where they were going but they followed a shining star in the sky to show them the way. They were bringing special gifts to the new King.

Does anyone know what they were? That's right Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh. Gold was given to kings, Frankincense was used to worship and Myrrh was a special perfume. They knew they would find a very special baby , Gods own Son and they followed a bright star in the sky that lead them to him. I wonder if our friends will manage to get their gifts to their family. Well we'll find out more next week as we continue on

our journey into the outback.

Craft Activities (both age groups)

Candle made from a flannel

Green felt Christmas tree.

Early Finishers

Make a card
Colouring Stencil

Music

Theme song
We Three Kings

Prayer

Dear God,
We thank you that you are with us wherever we go . Thank you for showing us the way to love and to help others.



Week 3: Too Busy/No Room

Preparation

A few old tree branches could be placed around the stage area and maybe a couple of chairs to make it look like a verandah. An old type of lamp could be lit to signal that it's late.

Setting

The scene starts with the family in the car obviously feeling exhausted. The scene commences as they've just arrived at the farm.

Storytime.

Girl: (yawning loudly) Are we there yet?

Mum: Yes we've just pulled in to the farmhouse. I really looking forward to a cup of tea. I'm exhausted.

Dad: Your exhausted! I'm the one who's been driving for days. Never mind.Lets get inside and say hello to everyone. I wonder where they all are?
(Dad beeps the horn. A lady in an Apron comes out to welcome them)

Madge: Oh here you all are. How are you all? It's great to see you.

Boy: Hi aunty Madge. Where are the kids?

Madge: The kids are both in bed and I'm sorry to say everyone else is down at the dam. We've had a few problems today with sheep dying. All the men are down there trying to sort it out.



Mum: Oh Madge I'm sorry. Well don't worry about us. We'll just unpack our things and get settled in the house.

Madge: Well that's another problem. You see we've had to hire quite a few extra people to help us out and their living in the house. There's no room for you to stay here. Would you mind driving a little bit down the road and staying in the wool shed. It's nice and warm and you can come up to the house for meals.

Kids: Wow! Fantastic ! That'll be great.

Dad: O.K kids. Just calm down. Lets hop inside for a cuppa before we head off to the wool shed for the night. I hope those sheep aren't too noisy.

Mum: Couldn't be as bad as your snoring dear .

Kids: Mum's right dad (both laugh)

Madge: Come on in for a cuppa. It's been a long , long trip.(Move offstage)

Leader

Have you ever been somewhere thats been packed out.? Well do you remember last week we talked about Mary and Joseph. Can any remember where they were traveling to.Yes. That's right, to Bethlehem. Well when they got there, it was packed out with people from all over the land and they were all trying to find somewhere to stay. Mary was about to have her baby and they were desperate to find somewhere to stay the night. The only place they could find was in a stable at the back of an inn. Mary and Joseph spent the night surrounded by animals waiting for the birth of their baby.

Prayer

Dear God,
Sometimes things don't always go the way we think they will. Thank you that even in these times you are

with us , guiding us and loving us. Amen

Craft

Infants 1 Decorate gift boxes with gum nuts etc
2 Bon bons toilet rolls covered in red /brown crepe paper. Filled with lollies and tied with raffia and gum nuts pasted on.

Primary 1 Photo frames decorated with gum nuts. Spray with gold or silver paint
2 Bonbons as above



Early Finishers

Fruit loop threading
Colouring

Learn Bushdance ready for next week.
Give out letter advising of Family Bushdance BBQ

Read No room at the Inn



Week 4: Christmas Celebration

Preparation

The room is set up as a barn with bales of hay and party balloons. In one section have a food trough that represents the crib. Christmas music can be playing as the children enter. Have a Christmas tree set up in another corner for the children to put food donations for the Exodus Foundation

Setting

The children enter and are gathered into a party atmosphere. Give out some lollies etc. Children sit facing main stage.

Storytime

Boy: Hey mum this is a great way for us to celebrate Christmas.

Mum: I'm so glad we were able to come and see everyone and give them a bit of a hand. They've all had a tough year.

Girl: Yeah and I'm glad that dad thought of having a bushdance and BBQ in the Barn for all the family and neighbours.

Dad: Well that's what Christmas is all about. Coming together to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Let's hear the Christmas story before everyone comes. (father reads the Birth Narrative Luke 2: 1-7)

Boy: Gee dad, Mary and Joseph celebrated the birth of Jesus in a barn just like we are.

Girl: Yeah and people came from far and wide to join in the celebration.

Mum: Well kids ,that's why we still celebrate today. To remember that God gave Mary and Joseph and us a very special gift. The gift of Jesus.
Come on. Let's all go and get some of that country tucker.

Leader Let's talk to God

Hello again God,
Thanks God that you love us so much that you would give to our world the gift of your Son Jesus. Help us this Christmas to share your love with those around us . Amen.

Craft

Christmas baubles Decorate with glitter glue
Metallic Angel(primary) Paper angel (infants)



Early Finishers

Biscuit icing
Colouring stencil

Gathering time

Music Away in a manger

Read The nativity by Julie Vivas

The outback Barbie begins

Games to Music eg Freeze, North South East West (lolly prizes)

Pass the parcel (Number depends on number of kids)

Hokey pokey with parents

Heel toe polka (kids do it for parents then parents join in.)

Sausage sizzle

Tea/coffee iceblocks for kids.

When we did this theme we asked children to bring in some tinned food to help support those struggling at Christmas. Some hampers were sent to local families and the rest to the Exodus Foundation. We thought that this was a practical way to show that Christmas is a time of giving and bringing joy and hope to others.



The Bush Dance



The Bush Tucker



Fruit loop threading. Pasta can be used as well



White face washer with a red pipe cleaner rolled inside for a flame. Place in a cake of soap and wrap in tulle.



Bon-bons filled with wrapped lollies and covered with crepe paper



Purchase inexpensive baubles and decorate with glitter glue.



Wattle Card
Crepe paper crumpled and rolled



Quilling 1
Years 3 and 4



Quilling 2
Years 5 and 6

Advent tours Presents

Christmas Mystery Tour

Overview

Join Pilot Pete and all his friends on a magical mystery tour as we visit other countries and discover the meaning of Christmas. Discover how others celebrate Christmas. Experience their food, customs and hospitality.

Setting

Each week the children will be boarded onto a pretend airline. A person should be selected to be the stewardess each week to welcome the children to the flight and give the usual instructions. Each child's seat should contain a foam papercup as an oxygen mask and a paper bag for air sickness. Once the stewardess has gone through procedures eg exit doors and practised using bags and masks the pilot is introduced. We had some fun with this and each week and the pilot was someone who's name was slightly different eg in the first week we had Pirate Pete and the aircraft was flown by a pirate which led to some comical dialogue. The flight takes off and lands in a different country each week. The four countries we will visit are Germany, Mexico, Spain and Australia. Once the flight has landed the children are escorted off the plane and into another space which is decorated to represent the country for the day.

Germany A large Christmas tree with lots of fake snow around the windows etc

Mexico Lots of colourful blankets and poinsettias. A couple of pinatas can be hung .

Spain The town square where a large Nativity scene will be set up.

Australia A few Gum tree branches or leave the space just as it usually is.

Week 1: Christmas is Coming

Today we visit Germany . We will enter Germany and meet a German villager who 's cutting down a tree. He says that he 's getting ready to celebrate Christmas. He asks the children if they are doing anything to prepare for Christmas. (Allow time for responses) he explains that the custom of the Christmas tree started in Germany when a father put candles on a fir tree to show his son how bright the star was on the night of Jesus birth and now it's a custom in many parts of the world. Explain that today we are going to make a little tree to remind us and make some decorations. Children help to prepare and decorate the tree at the end of the craft session.

Craft

Christmas trees (Primary and infants) Get conical shapes and wrap fringed crepe paper around them starting at the base Decorate with stars and glitter.

Cardboard Baubles (Primary /infants)

Colour and decorate with glitter glue and sequins. Thread a ribbon through to hang. Children will make two. One to hang on the tree and one to take home.

Early finishers

Decorating shortbread Christmas tree with icing and lollies.

Gathering time.

Decorate The Christmas tree

Silent Night

Come On ring Those Bells



Story :

The Three Trees

This story links well to the trees and gives a brief glimpse into the life of Jesus.

Prayer. Dear God,

It's very exciting getting ready for Christmas. Buying presents, going to parties and putting up our Christmas tree. Please help up to remember that at Christmas time we do all these things to celebrate and remember Jesus Birthday. Amen

Week 2 Christmas is Giving (Matthew 2: 1-12)

Today we visit Mexico. Engage the children in a Mexican hat dance as they walk into the room. The storyteller today can be sound asleep in the corner wearing a large sombrero. He wakes up to find the visitors and begin to tell them the story of the poinsettia, a tale of giving . A little child who had nothing to give the Christ child found a tiny bunch of wildflowers and gathered them to put near the manger. These changed into beautiful red flowers that were shaped like the Star of Bethlehem . (Poinsettia is a native Mexican flower.) This will be later linked to the story of the Three Kings and the gifts they gave .

Craft Activities

Mexican stars 5&6
Poinsettia Cards P-6 Select which one depending on ages
Use fake poinsettias to attach to a card. Decorate the border.
Cut out fabric poinsettia and outline using glitter glue.
Cut out pictures of poinsettias and paste onto card and decorate.

Glass painting (used as a gift)

Early Finishers

Fruit Loop threading to hang on the tree.

Gathering time

Songs

Come decorate the Christmas tree.
The Kings Journey

Story

The Three Kings
This can be read from either a childrens storybook or from the Bible

Song

We three Kings

Prayer

Dear God ,
Thank you that you love me
Help me to be kind and caring
And to give the gift of love to others
this Christmas.
Amen

Finsh with the breaking of the Pinata. All child should receive a lolly.

Week 3 A Time of Joy (Luke 2: 1-7)

Today we visit Spain. As we enter we find ourselves in the street with an old bullfighter and his pet Bull . They are practising their moves for a bull fight but explain that they must now stop because it is time to go and put up his nativity scene. He explains that a nativity is a special display that shows us the people involved in the christmas story. (this does not need to be a large one of cut out it might simply be one of figurenes). As he gets out the different figures he remembers who they are and tells a little about each. (Specific bible verses could be read out at this time if desired). Finally he will talk about the Baby Jesus and how much joy he gave to all these people. That's why we have a nativity scene to remind us of this special time.

Song Away in a Manger

Craft

Nativity Scene
Angel/ Shepherd/ King Decorate cone to make one of these
Mini wreath

Early Finishers

Biscuit decorating

Gathering Time

Songs

Tell me the story of Christmas
Mary had a little baby



Story

The Nativity by Julie Vivas
The Story of Christmas by Vivien French & Jane Chapman

Prayer

Dear loving God

Thank you for this special day when Jesus was born.

Many people came to celebrate the birth of Jesus. We thank you that we can celebrate his birth too. Amen

Week Four Christmas is a Time to Celebrate

Today we come back to Australia As the children enter there should be some appropriate music playing. (Christmas in the Scrub would be suitable) Children will be gathered into a long line and dance to the music following a leader. They can even have a game where they try to dance under the broom. Gather children around and remind them that we are having a big party to celebrate the birthday of Jesus. Have a couple of quieter games like "Freeze" to settle them down. Gather children together for a song . Who can remind us why we are celebrating today. That's right. It's Jesus Birthday . What are some of the things we do in Australia to Celebrate Christmas? Decorate our homes, Carols by candlelight, decorate trees, give presents, and have parties. That's right and today we are going to have a birthday cake to remind us whose birthday we are celebrating. (bring out a large cake which can be used as desert for the BB Q.) Light the candles and sing (Happy Birthday to Jesus.)

Craft

Candle and candle holder (all children) Cut a polystyrene ball into half. Cut out a small hole big enough to hold a candle. Decorate with Poinsettias.
Peg reindeer (all Children)
Mini wreath



Gathering Sing

Tell me the story of Christmas
Mary had a little baby

Read

The Angel in a Gum tree
Written by Diana Chase/ Valerie Krantz and published by Sandcastle Books 1999.

This story looks at how Christmas is celebrated in Australia and around the World. This a great one to tie up the unit

Prayer.

Jesus ,thankyou that you love all of us. Help us this Christmas to remember that it is your birthday and that's why we celebrate. Amen.

Let's Celebrate

BBQ for the children and their parents. Have a few games lined up for the children to play while they wait
It's a good idea to have a few extra church people on hand to talk to parents and help with the BBQ.

Children leave with parents.

Resources

Children's Books to read.

The tale of two trees	Angela Elwell Hunt		Three important times in Jesus life
Jacob's Gift	Max Lucado		
The crippled lamb	Max Lucado		
The Legend of the poinsettia	Tommie de Paola		Mexican Legend
A Christmas Star called Hazel	Vivien French	Walker	Simple retelling of the Christmas story
The Nativity	Scriptural	Omnibus	Superb illustrations
The Christmas Miracle of Jonathon Toomey	Susan Wojciechowski	Walker	How the events of Christmas help a man to face life again
My Dad ran Over a frog	Rob Portlock	Intervarsity	The Church ina hurting world
Donkey Daniel	Janice Kramer	Arch Books	Luke2 1-18 from a donkeys point of view
The ChristmasBook	Dick Bruna	ABCbooks	Simple retelling of the christmas story
The Star	Julie Litty	North South Books	Forest animals discuss the meaning of Christmas
An Angel came to Nazareth	Anthony Knott	Five mile press	Stunning pictures
Three wise women	Mary Hoffman	Frances lincoln	A fresh slant to the three wise men.
The Christmas Story	Heather Amery	Usborn Press	Simple retelling
Little Owl and the Star	Mary Murphy	Walker Books	A little owl follows an amazing star.
The Long Way home	Emily Rodda	Working title press	A little possum loses her way at Christmas
Lauras Christmas star	Klaus Baugart		Excitement of Chistmas
One Night in a stable	Guido Vixconti		Hospitality and friendship
The Christmas Star	Marcus Pfister	ISBN	peace
Hello Baby	Jenny Overend	ABC Book	Celebrate the Birth of a baby at home

Log on to nsw.uca.org.au/boe/children/resources for a great list of books and videos

Worship is for everyone by Julie Pinazza. A fantastic resource book with great ideas for using children books in worship.

Wombat divine	Mem Fox	Scholastic	We all have a place in the Christmas story.
Tari's First Christmas	Mary Diesal_Fedderson	Keystone paperbacks	A Kangaroo searches for the meaning of Christmas
Kippy Koalas Christmas Present	Win Morgan	Albatross books	A story of giving

Resources Books Leaders

Advent workshops for kids	Bronwyn Wood and Heather Hollingsworth	Joint board of Christian Ed	How to establish Advent Workshops. Everything you need.
Worship is for Everyone	Julie Pinazza		Using stories in worship
New Dawn			Worship from Advent to Pentecost
KUCA News		Uniting church	Great resource for Kids

Music

Christmas in the Scrub Leigh Newton
Peter Coombs

Web sites.

nsw.uca.org.au/boe/children/resources/books
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www.enchantedlearning.com/ crafts pictures and crafts

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