Manger Messages: A Christmas Activity for All Ages

Instructions

Our prayer is that **Manger Messages** would provide meaningful opportunities for families to share in the incredible unfolding of Christ's birth through nativity-themed Scripture messages and inspirational images. As you create (and re-create!) nativity scenes throughout this season and into the New Year, may your hearts be drawn to worship.

Print the Following:

Instructions
2-part Nativity Scene Backdrop (print on cardstock for greater durability)
Character Discs (cardstock recommended)
Scripture Cards - sets 1 and 2 (cardstock recommended)
Back Design for Scripture Cards (optional)

Prepare Game Pieces:

- Assemble Nativity Scene Backdrop: line up left and right sheets of 8 ½ by 11 paper to create the complete nativity scene. (These can be taped together from behind or glued/taped to a stronger surface.)
- Cut out Character Discs, 18 in all.
- Cut out Scripture Cards, 18 in all. (If you would like to include the Bethlehem image on the backs of each card, print double-sided.)

To Play:

- Place Nativity Scene on playing surface.
- Shuffle Scripture Cards. Place face down on playing surface.
- Spread out Character Discs, face up, on playing surface. (*Alternate play: shuffle and distribute Character Discs among players.*)
- Players take turns drawing Scripture Cards. Read the passage (some passages are featured more than once) and select corresponding Character Disc, placing it on the Nativity Scene as desired. Place Scripture Card in discard pile. (*Alternate play: player holding corresponding image adds his/her Character Disc to Nativity Scene.*)
- Play is complete once all Character Discs have been added to the Nativity Scene. (*Alternate play: a "winner" is declared when a player becomes the first to add each of his/her Character Discs to the Nativity Scene . . . but only as long as someone has already added Baby Jesus!*)

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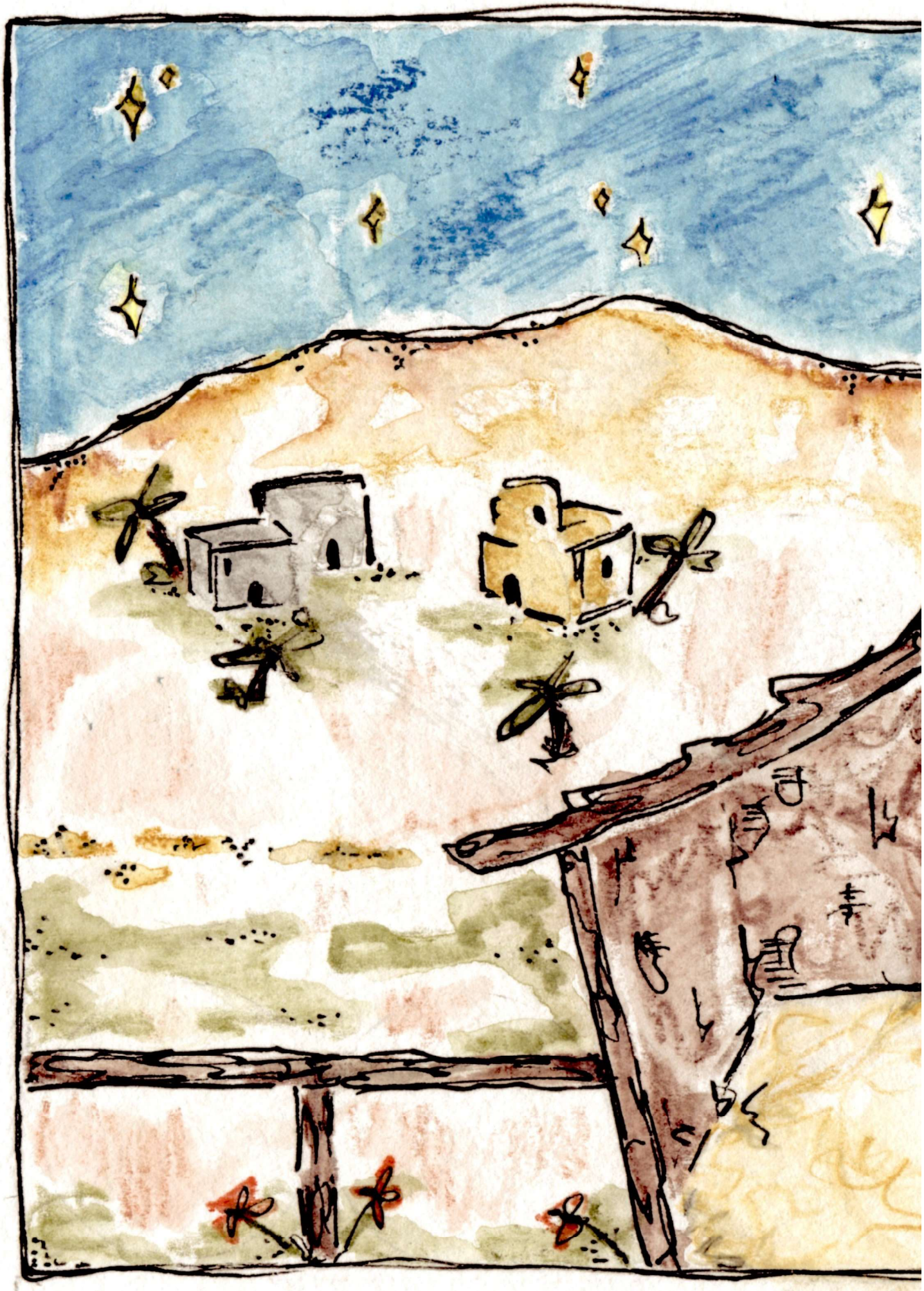
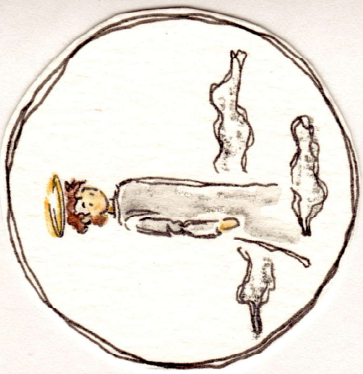
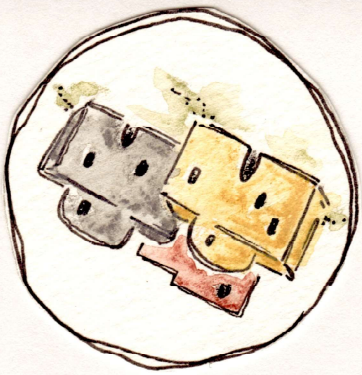
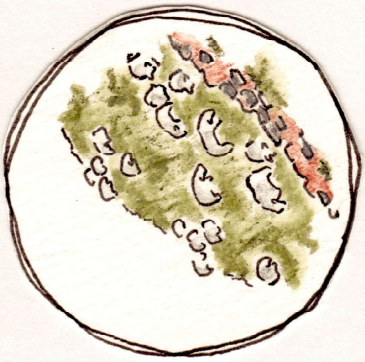
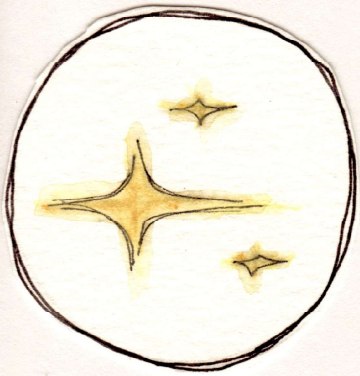


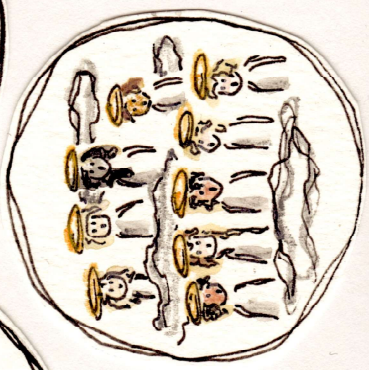


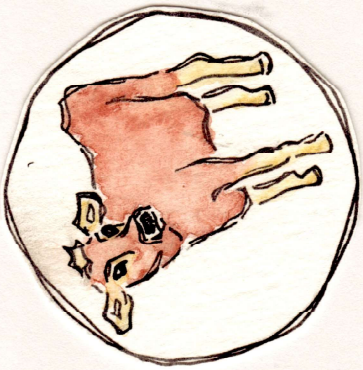


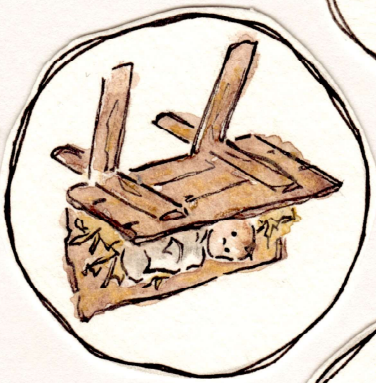
BETHLEHEM

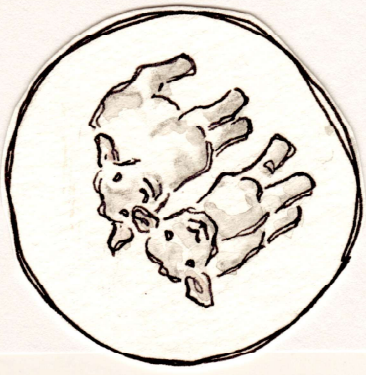


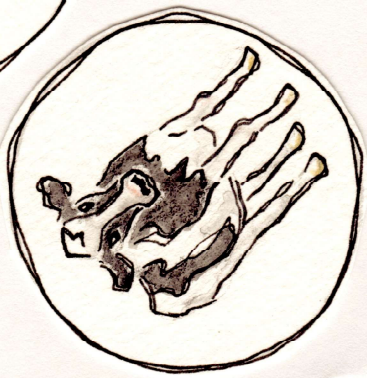












Manger Messages: Scripture Cards Set 1

Joseph

"So Joseph left Nazareth, a town in Galilee, and went to the town of Bethlehem in Judea. It was known as the town of David. Joseph went there because he was from the family of David. Joseph registered with Mary because she was engaged to marry him."
(Luke 2:4-5)

Mary

"Mary gave birth to her first-born son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn."
(Luke 2:7)

Baby Jesus

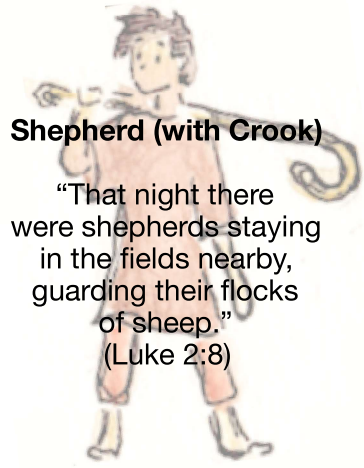
"For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us."
(Isaiah 9:6)
"You shall name Him Jesus. He will be great, and His kingdom will have no end."
(Luke 1:31-33)

Sheep (pair)

"That night there were shepherds staying in the fields nearby, guarding their flocks of sheep."
(Luke 2:8)

Angel

"Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among [the shepherds] . . . .They were terrified, but the angel reassured them. 'Don't be afraid!' he said. 'I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. The Savior — yes, the Messiah, the Lord — has been born today in Bethlehem!"
(Luke 2:9-11)



Shepherd (with Crook)

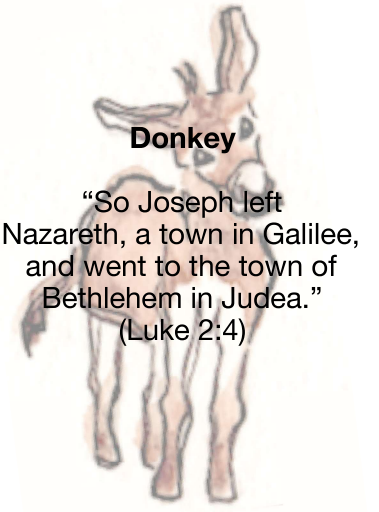
"That night there were shepherds staying in the fields nearby, guarding their flocks of sheep."
(Luke 2:8)

Wise Men

"Some wise men from eastern lands arrived in Jerusalem asking, 'Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw His star . . . and we have come to worship Him." . . . They entered the house and saw the child with His mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped Him . . . and gave Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh."
(From Matthew 2)

Cow (black and white)

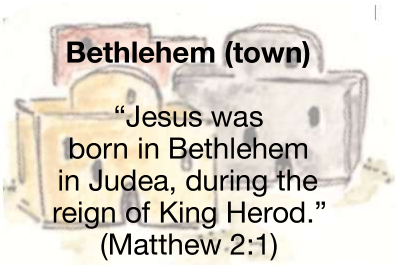
"Praise the Lord from the earth, . . . You mountains and all hills, . . . wild animals and all cattle, small creatures and flying birds . . . young men and women, old men and children. Let them praise the name of the Lord."
(from Psalm 148)



Donkey

"So Joseph left Nazareth, a town in Galilee, and went to the town of Bethlehem in Judea."
(Luke 2:4)

Manger Messages: Scripture Cards Set 2



Bethlehem (town)

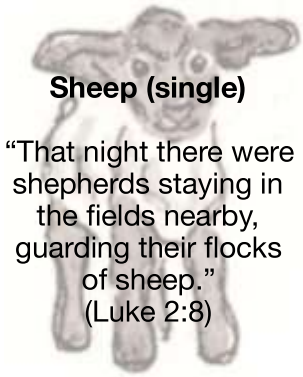
"Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the reign of King Herod." (Matthew 2:1)

Birds

"Praise the Lord from the earth, . . . You mountains and all hills, . . . wild animals and all cattle, small creatures and flying birds . . . young men and women, old men and children. Let them praise the name of the Lord." (from Psalm 148)

Star

"The star they had seen in the east guided [the wise men] to Bethlehem. It went ahead of them and stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were filled with joy!" (from Matthew 2)



Sheep (single)

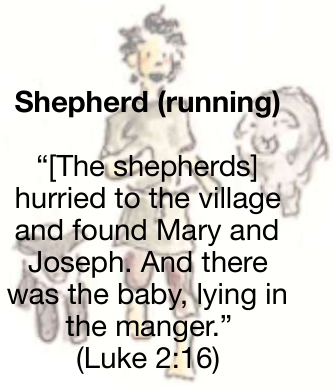
"That night there were shepherds staying in the fields nearby, guarding their flocks of sheep." (Luke 2:8)

Sheep (flock)

"That night there were shepherds staying in the fields nearby, guarding their flocks of sheep." (Luke 2:8)

Angels (Multitude)

"Suddenly, the angel was joined by a vast host of others — the armies of heaven — praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased." (Luke 2:13-14)



Shepherd (running)

"[The shepherds] hurried to the village and found Mary and Joseph. And there was the baby, lying in the manger." (Luke 2:16)

Bethlehem (sign)

"O Bethlehem Ephrathah, you are but a small Judean village, yet you will be the birthplace of my King who is alive from everlasting ages past!" (Micah 5:2)

Cow (brown)

"Praise the Lord from the earth, . . . You mountains and all hills, . . . wild animals and all cattle, small creatures and flying birds . . . young men and women, old men and children. Let them praise the name of the Lord." (from Psalm 148)

Manger Messages: Scripture Card Back Design